

# **Year Seven Evaluation Report**

**University of Alaska Anchorage  
3211 Providence Drive**

November 10, 2018

*A confidential report of findings prepared for the Northwest Commission on  
Colleges and Universities*

## **Evaluation Committee**

Dr. Laura Woodworth-Ney (Chair)  
Executive Vice President and Provost  
Idaho State University

Dr. Nathan Lindsay  
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
University of Montana –Missoula

Dr. Marc Geisler  
Associate Dean  
College of Humanities & Social Sciences  
Western Washington University

Dr. Anne Cubilié  
Executive Director  
William O. Douglas Honors College  
Central Washington University

Dr. Stephanie L. Witt  
Professor of Public Policy and Administration  
Boise State University

Dr. Michaelann Jundt  
Associate Dean  
Undergraduate Academic Affairs  
University of Washington

Dr. Lynn Baird  
Dean Emerita  
University of Idaho Libraries  
University of Idaho

Mr. Brian Dixon  
Assistant Vice President of Student Financial Services  
Washington State University

NWCCU Liaison:  
Dr. Mac Powell  
Senior Fellow  
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

## Table of Contents

General Introduction .....	4
Assessment of Self-Evaluation Report .....	4
Student Achievement Data .....	5
Institutional History Impacting Accreditation Visit.....	5
Third Party Comments .....	6
Report on NWCCU Eligibility Requirements .....	6
Standard 1 – Mission and Core Themes .....	7
Standard 1.A – Mission.....	7
Standard 1.B – Core Themes .....	8
Standard 2 – Resources and Capacity .....	11
Standard 2.A - Governance.....	11
Standard 2.B – Human Resources.....	14
Standard 2.C – Education Resources .....	15
Standard 2.D – Student Support Resources .....	18
Standard 2.E – Library and Information Resources.....	19
Standard 2.F – Financial Resources.....	21
Standard 2.G – Physical and Technological Infrastructure.....	23
Standard 3 – Planning and Implementation .....	26
Standard 3.A – Institutional Planning.....	26
Standard 3.B – Core Theme Planning.....	26
Standard 4.A and 4.B – Assessment and Improvement.....	28
Standard 5 – Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability .....	34
Standard 5.A – Mission Fulfillment.....	34
Standard 5.B – Adaptation and Sustainability .....	34
Summary .....	34
Commendations .....	35
Recommendations.....	35

## **General Introduction**

University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) is the University of Alaska System's largest institution, and its only urban institution. A system-level reorganization in 1987 merged the university and Anchorage community college with three other community colleges, creating a broad program mission that has stayed true to its open-access roots and offers a wide range of programs, from occupational endorsements to doctoral degrees, across a region the size of Montana. The institution manages four community campuses that developed independently, are geographically dispersed, and are uniquely tied to the communities that they serve: Kodiak Island, the Kenai Peninsula, Prince William Sound, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The institution is the designated health campus for the University of Alaska System, and its health science programs collectively generate more degrees than any other area except for the general Associate of Arts degree.

In 2006 the University of Alaska Anchorage was one of the first institutions nationwide to be recognized with the "Community Engagement" classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and has continued to receive reaffirmation of this designation.

The institution exhibited a high level of cooperation, transparency, engagement and support during the site visit. Evaluation team members were struck by the consistent focus on student success and commitment to addressing low retention and graduation rates.

This report focuses on requirements and institutional responses during Year Seven of the accreditation cycle. The team conducted an on-site evaluation, aided by video-conferencing to the community campuses, and team members employed the use of written documentation, electronic and paper exhibits, web resources, personal observations, and in-depth interviews to complete their work. The team focused on the time period represented by the Year Seven Report and up to the site visit.

### **Assessment of the Self-Evaluation Report**

The institution's self-evaluation report is well-organized, comprehensive, and well-written. Exhibits were made available in advance or supplied upon request. The report was lengthy enough to provide substantive examples and succinct enough to be manageable for the team.

However, the evaluation panel struggled with some shortcomings of the Self-Evaluation Report, primarily in the lack of a clearly articulated connection between the Mission, Core Themes, and the institution's new strategic plan, UAA 2020. The failure to directly tie Core Theme planning within the Self-Evaluation narrative to the new strategic plan process forced the team to request additional documentation mapping the Core Themes to the UAA 2020 plan. In addition, the team could not discern from the Self-Study the reasoning or methodology behind the Indicator measures and targets. Through its on-campus interviews, review of planning materials, and the mapping document provided by the institution to the Evaluation Team, it became clear to the team that the UAA 2020 plan was indeed a direct outcome of Core Theme Planning.

## **Student Achievement Data**

In order to address low student achievement numbers, UAA has embarked on an inclusive planning process to create a bridge 2020 strategic plan focused primarily on the student success objectives, with a primary emphasis on retention and graduation rates. The revised targets are ambitious and reasonable, and UAA is making concrete changes to advising which, along with the development of specific academic pathways, show considerable promise to support greater retention and graduation rates among all of UAA's students. UAA is going to report in 2018 a 6% increase in FTFT 6-year Baccalaureate graduate rate, which is evidence that UAA's efforts during the review period have had a significant impact, and UAA is poised for further improvements due to new programs being instituted this year. Most importantly UAA has used disaggregated data to better direct its efforts toward all students, including diverse students and students who arrive at UAA not fully prepared for college-level work.

## **Institutional History Impacting Accreditation Visit**

UAA was scheduled for regular review in Fall 2017, and then experienced a one-year delay by the Commission for its Seven Year Site Visit. In 2014, following an Ad Hoc Report and site visit, the Commission approved UAA accreditation at the doctoral level. Accreditation visits during the review cycle resulted in two outstanding recommendations. The first recommendation came from the Fall 2011 Year One Peer-Evaluation Report:

*The evaluation panel recommends that the University of Alaska Anchorage refine its indicators of achievement to ensure that the indicators are meaningful, direct measures of the objectives (Standard 1.B.2).*

The second recommendation came from the Fall 2014 Mid-Cycle Peer-Evaluation Report:

*The Commission recommends that the University of Alaska Anchorage define mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations (Standard 1.A.2).*

The team found evidence that the institution has met the requirements of both recommendations.

In relationship to the first recommendation the team found evidence that the institution has undergone an extensive, inclusive process to simplify its institutional assessment plan and to review and refine its indicators of achievement. The institution engaged governance and leadership groups in a revision process where they were asked to respond to the question, "Why is this indicator meaningful to the institution and to you in your work?" The results pared down the institution's indicators to a more meaningful, compact number. The UAA 2009 Self-Study cited 17 Goals, 45 Outcomes, and 160 Indicators, while the UAA 2018 Self-Study identifies a streamlined 7 Objectives and 16 Indicators, all of which the team found tie directly to the objectives and provide meaningful measures.

In order to address the second recommendation the institution again demonstrated the resiliency of its planning processes by refining its definition of mission fulfillment. The institution moved away from its previous definition, which applied equal weight to all indicators, to a new approach which "gives priority to particular measures from the Core Themes" (UAA 2018 Self-Study, 17).

Institutional stakeholders were engaged in a dialogue that resulted in the Mission Fulfillment Expectations, which clearly define mission fulfillment in relation to UAA's purpose, characteristics, and expectations as an institution. The evaluation panel found that both the process used to reengage the campus in the dialogue around mission fulfillment, as well as the identification of Mission Fulfillment Expectations and the data and analysis of the same, met the concerns identified in the second recommendation.

### **Third Party Comments**

The Northwest Commission received a single Third Party Comment during the comment period. The comment was reviewed and was determined to fall outside of the Seven Year Evaluation period, as the substance of the complaint dates to an incident that occurred at Anchorage Community College in 1979. The institution has, since 1979, experienced a system-wide merger leading to its current structure, and multiple accreditation site visits. Anchorage Community College became part of the new UAA with the system-wide merger in 1987.

### **Report on NWCCU Eligibility Requirements**

The institution reflects adherence to NWCCU Eligibility Requirements. The following detailed information highlights selected components that reflect substantial compliance or concerns:

Eligibility Requirement 3. Mission and Core Themes: The institution has engaged in thoughtful and inclusive work throughout the review period to ensure that its Core Themes are tied to its Mission, and that its measures are meaningful, well-understood by its communities, and used to improve the institution. The team's meetings with stakeholders made it clear that the institution is deeply committed to its Mission, and that the Core Themes are understood and supported through planning. The institution's Core Theme planning processes have allowed it to exhibit resilience and ongoing commitment to Mission amid external fiscal pressures and internal leadership turnover. The institution's priority, from faculty to staff to administrators, is to support student success and well-being, and to maintain an access mission that has provided identity to the institution since its inception.

Eligibility Requirements 9 and 10. Administration and Faculty: The institution is adequately staffed with well-qualified and committed personnel. UAA's unique geography and location are at once a strength and a challenge, as it struggles with turnover of administrators and faculty, as indicated in the Self-Study. The institution has committed to continuing to support retention of administrators and faculty. There is a need for the support of mentoring programs aimed at retaining diverse faculty and administrators, and at providing support in a location that possesses special advantages and challenges.

Eligibility Requirement 11. Educational Program: The institution's program mix, from certificates to doctorates, reflects a uniquely broad mission that encompasses community colleges within a research, access-based model. UAA's range of educational programming aligns directly with its communities' needs, and is highly responsive to the needs of students and regional employers. Course, program and institutional learning outcomes are in place and assessed by a highly-regarded institutional structure with a long and effective history at the institution. New faculty and staff are provided training on the assessment tools in use on campus, and the institution's assessment plan

clearly demonstrates where changes have been made, on an annual basis, in response to evaluation. The institution's massive service area requires that it utilize a mix of tools to overcome geography and isolation in the delivery of programs, and as it addresses these issue can serve as a model for institutions with rural service regions.

Eligibility Requirement 13. Library and Information Resources: The UAA/APU [Alaska Pacific University] Consortium Library serves students, faculty, staff, and the public through a joint facility and with shared resources. The Consortium Library's Archives and Special Collections department collects, preserves, and makes available for research "records that document Alaska's past and present" (UAA/APU Consortium Library Web Site).

Eligibility Requirement 22. Student Achievement: UAA created clear objectives and indicators and data reporting to measure student diversity, access, persistence, and achievement across UAA and its community campuses, and student achievement is central to the institution's Core Themes, planning processes, and mission fulfillment. The institution's Student Achievement Data, while showing significant improvement for 2018, demonstrates that UAA needs to continue to pay focused and intentional attention to addressing low retention and graduation rates.

Eligibility Requirement 23. Institutional Effectiveness: The review team found ample evidence that the university has a historical culture of assessment that guides decisions and resource allocation, and that the assessment plan is flexible and inclusive. The institution employs an institutional effectiveness team that ensures that measures are meaningful, well-understood by the community, and are used to advance institutional improvement and mission fulfillment.

## **Standard 1 – Mission and Core Themes**

### **Standard 1.A – Mission**

The University of Alaska Board of Regents approved the current UAA Mission Statement in 2007, and the current Core Themes in 2012. UAA's widely published mission highlights the institution's commitment to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge; its unique location, geographic diversity, and diversity; its open access approach; and its wide range of programs from the community college through the doctoral research level.

UAA's Core Themes were selected through a campus-wide process in 2009 that resulted in the identification of five Core Themes directly tied to its mission: 1.) Teaching and Learning; 2.) Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity; 3.) Student Success; 4.) UAA Community; 5.) Public Square (Community Engagement). The team's site visit experiences confirmed that the mission and Core Themes were well-understood and embraced by the campus community, particularly as they relate to the institution's most recent strategic planning effort, University of Alaska Anchorage 2020 [UAA 2020], and that they feed into a clearly articulated definition of mission fulfillment that rests on an acceptable threshold for demonstrating success.

Faculty, staff, students and administrators confirmed in meetings during the site visit that UAA 2020 resulted from a unifying process that provides "bridge" planning during a time of transition. The UAA 2020 plan emerged from open forums designed to prepare for the Seven Year Site Visit, and its goals support the institution's Core Themes, particularly Core Theme 3 (Student

Success) and the institution's definition of mission fulfillment. Many campus community members cited the UAA 2020 planning experience as "the first time that all of the campuses came together as one UAA," and it is evident and commendable that the UAA 2020 plan has broad community and campus support.

A new chancellor has been hired and is in place, and with that transition the institution will utilize the findings from the Seven Year Site Visit and data from the bridge 2020 plan to move into the next phase of its core theme planning. The team found ample evidence that UAA's assessment culture, mission, Core Themes, and definition of mission fulfillment provided stability in planning that allowed the institution to exhibit real resilience during a period marked by fiscal challenges and leadership change.

### **Standard 1.B – Core Themes**

UAA's core theme framework has been in place since 2012, and the team found evidence that the institution has identified and maintained meaningful and assessable indicators for evaluating each of the five Core Themes, and has used this information to advance improvements to mission fulfillment.

#### Core Theme 1 – Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are at the center of UAA's culture and mission. The quality of the educational experience is a top priority, and student learning outcomes are identified for all programs. The institution serves as the largest provider in Alaska of programs for workforce training, technical education, and other high demand job areas.

This core theme has two objectives: 1) Student learning outcomes are achieved; and 2) UAA academic programs meet state needs. Each of these objectives has appropriate indicators and measures that are meaningful, assessable, and verifiable. One area of more recent attention is the tracking of non-degree seeking students, who make up 29 percent of enrollment. This has been addressed by evaluating course pass rates, which is the first measure related to the student learning outcomes objective. This measure is a leading indicator for retention and degree completion, and evaluation of course completion rates has been built into the program review process.

The next measure related to student learning is the achievement of program learning outcomes in all degrees and certificates. The assessment of these learning outcomes is conducted annually, and targets were set that students should meet 90 percent of the measured learning outcomes. The Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee conducts an annual survey of programs to track this metric.

In support of the objective that UAA programs meet state needs, indicators include total degrees and certificates awarded with emphasis on high-demand job areas, as well as total student credit hours. The focus on high-demand job areas is critical to fill positions in health, natural resources, technology, and engineering. Tracking total student credit hours is also a solid measure for evaluating how UAA is serving its community and meeting educational demand. A "Stay-On-Track" initiative has focused on encouraging students to enroll in 15 credits per

semester, which has helped to partially offset the declining student credit hours in recent years.

### Core Theme 2 – Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

Research, scholarship, and creative activity are carried out by individual faculty and students, as well as across UAA's research centers and institutes. The objective for this Core Theme is that UAA research, scholarship, and creative activities advance knowledge, and the objective is supported by two indicators: 1) The number and dollar amounts of proposals submitted and awarded through grants, contracts, and sponsored activities in research, scholarship, and creative activities; and 2) National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) research expenditures.

Each of these indicators is meaningful and assessable. The number and dollar amounts of proposals submitted and awarded reflect the scholarly culture at UAA and influence the university's quality and reputation. The university has placed greater emphasis on supporting faculty seeking external support, managing projects, communicating results, and translating results into action steps. The Office of Research and Graduate Studies plays a large role in setting targets, with guidance provided from the Chancellor's Cabinet.

The NACUBO research expenditures are a widely-used measure for grant activity, and are very useful for regional and national benchmarking. UAA's ability to attract high profile grants has long term impacts on faculty research and undergraduate research opportunities.

### Core Theme 3 – Student Success

UAA created clear objectives and indicators and data reporting to measure student diversity, access, persistence, and achievement across UAA and its community campuses, and the core theme is central to the institution's mission fulfillment. During the review period, UAA instituted several meaningful improvements in diversity to support students, including dedicated advising for diverse students and new training for staff and faculty supporting diverse students. Additionally, the Faculty Senate Diversity Committee was very active, providing leadership across the campuses, to revise GER curriculum to enhance diversity and create with the administration a faculty post-doc program intended to attract and retain diverse faculty members. In fact, two have already been appointed and more are on the way. The recent Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan is a substantial document that was created and is being implemented with support across the entire university. A position was created at a high level to coordinate specifically Alaska Native student success. Another high level Student Success position was created with direct reporting to the Provost to coordinate efforts across the university in relationship to all the student success objectives.

With renewed energy and focus in 2016, UAA adopted a bridge 2020 strategic plan focused primarily on the student success objectives, with a primary emphasis on retention and graduation rates. The revised targets are ambitious and reasonable, and UAA is making concrete changes to advising which, along with the development of specific academic pathways, show considerable promise to support greater retention and graduation rates among all of UAA's students. UAA is going to report in 2018 a 6% increase in FTFT 6-year Baccalaureate graduate rate, which is evidence that UAA's efforts during the review period have had a significant impact, and UAA is poised for further improvements due to new programs being instituted this year. Most importantly UAA has used disaggregated data to better direct its efforts toward all students, including diverse

students and students who arrive at UAA not fully prepared for college-level work. UAA has also consistently prioritized high impact practices in the classroom to support student success objectives. There has been ample administrative support for high impact practices and active faculty engagement in implementing them, with peer review practices to improve their delivery.

With respect to Core Theme 3, UAA was found to be in full compliance with this standard as evidenced by detailed interviews with administrators, faculty, staff, and students, and in the documents, exhibits, self-evaluation report. UAA launched and executed a comprehensive effort across the main campus and community campuses to address student success in relation to its mission with clear objectives, indicators, and data points. There were significant and sustained and coordinated actions, using the data from the student success indicators, to promote student success.

#### Core Theme 4 – Community

UAA Core Theme Four is organized through one encompassing objective, that “UAA’s environments support and sustain learning, working and living.” This is particularly aligned with the UAA mission elements of ‘open access’, to ‘serve the higher education needs of the state’ in a ‘rich diverse and inclusive environment’. Four indicators serve to measure the university’s success toward meeting this objective. In brief, the indicators focus on: 1) faculty and staff diversity; 2), faculty, staff and student satisfaction with their professional and learning environments; 3) development and management of a sustainable budget; and 4) the number of crimes, incidents and injuries reported.

UAA maintains an Emergency Operations Plan and a multi-disciplinary UAA Care Team, supported by a full-time coordinator, with formal processes to identify and help struggling and distressed students. The University maintains an emergency text messaging system, trains all staff and students on awareness and response to sexual harassment and assault, and maintains transparent crime and injury data.

With respect to Core Theme Four, the team’s examination of documents, survey and trend data, the self-evaluation report and a variety of detailed interviews find UAA to be in full compliance with this standard.

#### Core Theme 5 Public Square – Community Engagement

The commitment of UAA to the Public Square Core Theme is evident in several ways. UAA earned Carnegie status as a community engaged campus in 2006. UAA is also one of 83 Voter Friendly Campuses nationwide, a designation granted through NASPA student affairs. Commitment to the theme is evidenced in creation of the Community Engagement Council and the UAA Center for Community Engagement and Learning, directed by Judy Owens-Manley. The Center/Council has membership across academic units and from members of the community. The Center for Community Engagement and Learning has its own strategic plan and objectives that nest well within the UAA Core Theme of Public Square. The Center for Community Engagement and Learning has chosen “Resilient Communities” as a theme for their activities. There are six areas for engagement that draw upon and integrate academic areas from across the University.

Activities from the Center for Community Engagement and Learning include co-curricular events

such as forums, “Think Tank” sessions, and conferences. Curriculum based activities include the designation of Service Learning and Community Engaged class designations, with well-defined articulations of what the SL and CE course designations entail. In addition, many students each year are trained to become Community-Engaged Student Assistants, providing assistance to the Center for Community Engagement and Learning and to faculty sponsoring engagement activities in their courses. Courses are designated in course schedules with CE or Service Learning based on the level of community engagement expected of students.

## **Standard 2 – Resources and Capacity**

### **Standard 2.A - Governance**

#### **Governance and Governing Board**

The evaluation site team confirmed that the UAA faculty, staff, students and administrators participate in the governance of the institution through a series of established structures that include the Faculty Senate, Staff Council, Union of Students of the University of Alaska Anchorage (USUAA), and the UAA University Assembly, which combines members of the three other representative bodies and alumni. Each of the formal governance bodies operate according to their constitution and bylaws, which clearly delineate the authority, roles, and responsibilities of each. As stated in the Self-Study, representatives from each of these bodies also serve on other institution-wide committees, including the Planning and Budget Advisory Council (PBAC) and the Diversity Action Council (DAC). While the team was onsite, other advisory councils were identified, such as the Online Learning Advisory Council, which the Provost chairs. Faculty Senate leaders confirmed that the Senate meets regularly, follows its own policies and procedures, and provides opportunity for campus feedback as part of its advisory function.

The site review team struggled, however, to understand how the many varied advisory councils fit into the overall campus governance structure, the processes by which they are populated, and how the channel for their advice is maintained or directed to the appropriate administrator.

*Concern: UAA should clearly identify its system of advisory councils, and ensure that they are not duplicating effort, that they have clear channels for their advice, and that they have well-understood roles and charges.*

UAA is governed by a Board of Regents which has authority over the entire University of Alaska System. The 11-member Board is appointed by the Governor of Alaska to serve eight-year terms. The Alaska Legislature confirms each Regent appointment. Regents do not receive compensation for their service and are accountable to the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act. The site team confirmed with Board members that they hold approximately six meetings per year, and that decision-making authority rests with the whole. During its regular meetings, which provide opportunity for public testimony, the Board reviews and exercises broad authority over the policies of the University of Alaska System and its three accredited institutions, of which UAA is the largest. The Board appoints and evaluates the President of the UA System, who serves as the executive officer of the Board and appoints and evaluates the chancellors of the institutions within the system.

During the site visit, Board members confirmed that the system looks to UAA to provide health sciences leadership and to provide access to residents of Alaska's only metropolitan region. Board members confirmed commitments to student success, economic development, and Alaskan community needs, all of which connect to UAA's mission and Core Themes. Board members were engaged and expressed full support of UAA's role and mission within the system.

The University of Alaska System of governance includes a System Governance Council, which is "a mechanism for System Governance consisting of faculty, staff, student, and alumni representatives, which shall be called the System Governance Council" (UA System Governance Council Constitution, 2014). The constitution of the council was updated in 2014. The interaction of the institutional governance structures with the System's governance structures is clearly articulated on the University of Alaska System Governance Web Site.

While campus community members cited many examples of their involvement in UAA's planning and assessment processes, they were less clear about their role in system-level governance. The Self-Study report does not articulate, for example, how the local governance structure feeds into the state-level structure. "The recent Strategic Pathways initiative from the UA Presidents office," notes the Self-Study, "resulted in the creation of several system-level councils...in addition to longstanding, system-level faculty staff, and student representative governance groups" (UAA 2018 Self-Study, 40). In addition, some groups during the site visit expressed concern about lack of participation in the state-level Strategic Pathways initiative. Site reviewers had to weigh the information on campus against the UA System's Strategic Pathways plan, which convened more than twenty consultative groups that held approximately 180 meetings with faculty, students and staff, and the evidence that these meetings resulted in changes to the Strategic Pathways plan. *Concern: It is not clear that the governance structures on campus can be mapped clearly to the state system's governance structure, or that UAA stakeholders understand these connections and opportunities for input.*

## **Leadership and Management**

The college employs a sufficient number of highly qualified senior- and mid-level administrators, but the institution has endured several years of significant turnover in executive positions. *Concern: Evidence attests to the need for UAA to provide stable leadership and executive accountability to foster mission fulfillment by addressing interim executive positions.*

## **Policies and Procedures**

### Academic Policies and Procedures

UAA policies follow UA Board of Regents' Policies and Regulations across the academic domains. UAA uses its Catalog as an official means of communication with students, and faculty policies are published in the Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures. Policies on credit hours and distance education adhere to NWCCU guidelines, and UAA recently developed an Online Learning Advisory Council to ensure its alignment with distance education requirements. The University also joined the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements to strengthen its online procedures.

Library and information resources follow UA Board of Regents' Policy, and the Consortium Library publishes its policies and procedures on its website. Access to licensed databases occurs through IP authentication, or through a UAA username and password. Scholarly and creative work is made available to others through an institutional repository called Scholarworks@UA. Policies related to circulation, appropriate use of licensed and copyrighted materials, computers, and facilities are accessible to all library users, although they could be given more prominence to ease navigation, particularly as these policies apply to both collegiate and community user populations.

Transfer of credit policy is clearly outlined in the UAA Catalog and is in line with Board of Regents' Policy. UAA allows students to petition the acceptance of courses if they are not completed at a regionally-accredited institution. Credit for non-traditional learning is also available through CLEP, AP, IB, and other prior learning assessments. Concurrent enrollment can be done through an accredited high school or home school.

### Human Resources

UAA Human Resource Services maintains a robust web site that includes policies, procedures, and services for faculty and staff. In addition to providing clear links to Title IX training materials, there is a prominent "confidential hotline" for reporting discrimination, harassment or violence and an online reporting tool for equity and compliance. Staff evaluations are handled through a new online tool and faculty evaluation guidelines are clear and complete.

### Institutional Integrity

UAA adheres to high standards in its operations. The State of Alaska maintains ethics policies (AS 39.52, Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act) which apply to employees of UAA. In addition, the Board of Regents also regulates conflicts of interest and abuse of university positions for political purposes through its Policy 04.10. UAA's research conflict of interest policies are clearly outlined on its Conflict of Interest/Office of Sponsored Programs web page, where the university outlines well-defined procedures for ensuring ethical practices in research. UAA publications, including websites, the UAA Catalog, and the Student Handbook, provide detailed and clear information about programs and services. Students indicated that they understood where to find institutional information about their programs and student services.

### Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is ensured by policy that fosters "an environment supportive of conducting research, scholarship, and creative activity" that can be disseminated freely. Free and honest inquiry is tied to the Constitutional rights of freedom of speech, and tenure is highlighted as a means to ensure academic freedom. UAA's information resource management procedures are also designed to support academic freedom.

UAA promotes independent thought through its standards and expectations for faculty research and creative activity. Students also participate widely in undergraduate research, which has long been considered a strength at UAA. The INNOVATE awards and other awards for faculty scholarship support research without dictating the topics of inquiry. Conversations about challenging topics on

campus are facilitated through the “Start Talking” and “Stop Talking” handbooks that build upon “Difficult Dialogues” grant funding.

A Code of Ethics guides faculty behavior to ensure that scholarship is conducted accurately and honestly, and that findings are shared with appropriate attribution. Disciplinary actions are outlined for faculty who engage in academic misconduct, and university regulations specify the review process for allegations of such misconduct.

## **Standard 2.B – Human Resources**

UAA’s student-to-faculty and student-to-staff ratios are lower than the average of their peers. There is a lean Human Resource Services staff (approximately 15 people to serve all faculty, staff, student, and temporary positions at all five campuses) that is well-equipped for handling all aspects of the recruiting and hiring process.

Human Resource Services staff have worked over the last several years to standardized job categories and positions. This was done in concert with the University of Alaska System for staff positions. The work aligning faculty qualifications and expectations is continuing, following the very recent merger of the two faculty unions. This was a big victory for the university and the state.

Evaluations for staff members have been inconsistently administered (as was noted in the Self-Study), but Human Resource Services has recently implemented an online evaluation tool that will allow for improved tracking.

Faculty evaluation guidelines, as well as annual faculty activity reports, are clearly outlined on the UAA website; this includes a yearly timeline. In talking with faculty and staff, as well as the director of Human Resource Services, there have been recent shifts in expectations for faculty. Some of this is driven by budget constraints, as well as the need to balance teaching responsibilities with service expectations. *Suggestion: The evaluation team suggests that the institution continue to clarify what counts as “service” for all faculty and instructors and to be clear about college-specific expectations.*

In the last several years, budget constraints have led to reorganizations in some units and colleges; Human Resource Services worked closely with deans and staff to realign job responsibilities, even out work load, and update job descriptions. In several cases, the reorganization resulted in laying off staff people and then doing an internal search process for the updated positions. In most of these cases there were fewer jobs available than the number of people laid off. According to the Director of Human Resource Services, this “competition” for new positions mostly worked out well. Those staff who were not hired back into a unit worked with HR to secure different positions in the University, which was successful in most cases.

HR Services at UAA has the needed training modules for systems and requirement (including FERPA, internal UAA systems, and Title IX requirements) but there was some concern that recent budget cuts have reduced the availability of specific training opportunities. *Concern: There does not appear to be a centralized UAA resources for training faculty and staff. While the evaluation team understands that there are not abundant resources within Human Resource Services, having a plan to respond to training priorities and needs would be helpful in many areas of UAA.*

The Director of Human Resource Services was part of the team that developed the UAA Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan; the first key objective is “create/establish policies and procedures that increase the diversity of faculty, staff, and administrators.” *Suggestion: The evaluation committee suggests proceeding with the goal of researching and implementing best practices in recruiting and hiring a diverse staff and faculty.*

## **Standard 2.C – Education Resources**

UAA offers 167 degree and certificate programs at the undergraduate and graduate level, including 19 occupational endorsement certificates, 13 undergraduate certificates, 38 associate degree programs, 60 baccalaureate programs, 4 post-baccalaureate certificates, 23 master’s programs, 8 graduate certificates and 2 doctoral programs; 74 of these programs have specialized accreditation. The programs offered are consistent with the UAA open access mission to serve the higher education needs of the state through a rich, diverse and inclusive environment within which to discover and disseminate knowledge. Appropriate content and rigor of academic programs is evident throughout and assessed through a regular cycle of program review as mandated through Board of Regents’ Policy P10.06.010. These processes were confirmed during conversations with faculty, administrators and faculty senators. The process is guided by a Program Review Template and Guidelines which includes program faculty analysis and discussion of key findings from program student learning outcomes assessment and consideration of actions taken for improvement and evidence of impact. Additionally, program level learning outcomes for each program are clearly and concisely published in the UAA Catalog.

UAA has approved student learning outcomes for all courses and programs. Outcomes are published in several locations and formats. Program level and General Education student learning outcomes are published in the UAA Catalog and posted to the Institutional Research-Reports website. They are also incorporated into program assessment plans. Course student learning outcomes are electronically published in the Course Content Guides site of the electronic curricular management system and are provided to each student with course syllabi. However, as a sampling of syllabi during AY 17 and AY 18 found that this was not yet true for all courses, UAA should continue to work to ensure that all students at UAA are provided with course learning outcomes.

The awarding of credits and degrees are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with institutional policies. Academic credit is awarded in the form of semester credit hours as defined in Board of Regents’ Policy 10.04.035 and Regulation 10.04.035. All UAA degrees are awarded consistent with approved Board of Regents’ Policy and are consistent with higher education norms.

Consistency and coherence of degree programs are guided by the Curriculum and Academic Assessment Handbooks of the Faculty Senate, cyclical program review as outlined in Board of Regents’ Policy and where relevant, by external program accreditations. Cycles of faculty and administrative review of curriculum, student learning outcomes and assessment plans, along with annual assessment of student achievement within selected learning outcomes, are in place to ensure coherent program design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and published in the UAA Catalog and are consistent with Board of Regents’ Policy 10.05. It was clear from multiple conversations with faculty throughout the site visit that UAA faculty play a strong and consistent role in program review and are deeply engaged with curricular assessment at all levels. This is

supported by the finding from the Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee's 2017 Annual Academic Assessment Survey that 84% of survey respondents reported using past assessment results to make program improvements for AY 2017.

UAA faculty have an active role in the selection of new faculty, serving on search committees for tenure-track and term faculty positions as part of the service component of their workload. Input from faculty is required for all tenure and promotion decisions. The strong role of faculty at all levels of the curriculum and hiring process was confirmed through conversations with various groups of faculty and with the Faculty Senate Executive Board.

Interviews of students and Dean of Student staff members demonstrated that the academic policies and processes are carried out with compassion and support for students. Students have easy access to the policies, are well educated about them, and have ample support when using them. While students haven't always agreed with the results, the processes and policies themselves are sound and implemented with the best interests of everyone at UAA in mind, in particular students. The Disability policies regarding accommodations are fairly and equitably administered.

The policies for admission, placement, continuation, and termination are all clearly defined, published widely, and administered in a timely manner. A consistent focus on student success and assessment of student success objectives has led to the development of academic pathways to enhance placement for students who attend UAA but are not yet fully prepared for college-level work.

The UAA campus has an online student conduct code violation reporting tool. The Dean of Students office hosts a comprehensive website titled "Student Complaints and Disputes" that has all the resources needed for reporting and resolving academic and non-academic disputes. When asked, students were aware of the process and their resources.

### Library Resources

Library and information resources are integrated into the learning process at UAA through multiple channels, including through the inclusion of information literacy in two general education learning outcomes (GER #7 and #9), incorporation of activities into courses that require the use of library resources and the use of librarians to provide specific instruction to a class as requested.

Library instructional faculty have liaison assignments that ensure close collaboration with teaching faculty. UAA's library and its four community campus libraries offer instruction and tours as requested by teaching faculty. Institutional grants provided opportunities for librarians to develop close ties with disciplinary faculty that have led to ongoing collaborations. Based on interviews with teaching faculty, committee assignments and evidence from the LibQUAL + quantitative responses, librarians are perceived to be valued partners in the learning process.

The faculty, when creating new programs, currently do not document whether there is a concomitant need for library resources to support students and researchers. Adding library consultation to the existing program adoption processes would ensure that new programs under review would be clearly communicated to all affected units and that costs could be fully identified.

### Undergraduate Programs

All baccalaureate degree programs are required to have general education requirements that span seven areas dictated by the Board of Regents. These general education requirement (GER) courses are divided across three Tiers and require at least 37 credits. The third tier includes a capstone

course that blends broader skills with foundational knowledge.

UAA has outlined nine general education student learning outcomes that encourage students to communicate, reason, relate, interpret, investigate, identify, locate, adopt, and integrate. The General Education Advisory Committee is very engaged and proactive in assessing these learning outcomes, as well as ensuring that newly proposed general education courses meet at least one of these outcomes. The Director of General Education has been shepherding the assessment efforts during the last three years.

The instructional components of applied degree programs have requirements in oral communication, written communication, and computation. Certificate programs often embed training in communications, computation, and human relations. Last year, the general education component of AAS degrees was aligned with the baccalaureate general education requirements. The AAS program curricula and assessment plans are being updated accordingly.

UAA does not award credit for prior experiential learning through Prior Learning Assessments. Credit for experiential learning is guided by Board of Regents' Policy.

Procedures for the acceptance of transfer credit are outlined in the UAA Catalog according to defined UAA criteria and policy. Transfer credits are accepted based on comparison to UAA courses by content, level of instruction, course activities and student outcomes. UAA utilizes an online Transfer Evaluation System to allow incoming and current students to review recent transfer decisions made from frequent transfer institutions, facilitating degree planning. UAA also supports non-traditional credit evaluations for accepted degree-seeking UAA students.

### Graduate Programs

The individual graduate programs each are supported within their departments and colleges, and there are clear policies that distinguish undergraduate from graduate work. However, the Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report lacks consistent evidence to demonstrate how the graduate programs are supporting UAA's Core Themes, in particular with respect to Student Success. In interviews, both the Interim Graduate Dean and graduate program directors spotlighted a lack of strategic planning, which is concerning given the 10-year decline in graduate enrollments of 27%. Little evidence was presented in documentation or interviews to demonstrate how UAA is addressing the overall decline, except one program that is individually moving to make its degrees hybrid and online in an effort to address an approximately 35% decline in enrollment. In a change made just before the review committee visit, the program directors reported that all non-resident graduate students would receive in-state tuition, but it wasn't clear what that would mean or how it was part of planning, assessment, and implementation of student success. The interim graduate dean reported the improved IR institutional data for student success hasn't been implemented for graduate students as it has for undergraduate students.

Graduate admissions and transfer of credit is accomplished with clarity for each individual program and with extensive faculty involvement to ensure academic credentials. The Faculty Senate Graduate Academic Board reviews graduate program curriculum and policies, and the graduate dean has a faculty advisory committee, ensuring extensive faculty participation in all the decisions. Interviews with the Interim Graduate Dean and faculty directors from several programs demonstrated compliance, and demonstrated that changes to graduate programs typically start with faculty initiation.

Several of UAA's graduate programs frequently grant credit for various forms of experiential learning, as many of the programs are community based as well as professionally oriented. All credit earned is part of formal graduate programs, and there is faculty oversight of the granting of all credit.

Each graduate program has clearly spelled out student learning outcomes that are appropriate to the type of the graduate program, as outlined in the standard. All the graduate courses have clearly communicated student learning outcomes, and the program and course outcomes are aligned. There is thorough overview of graduate program outcomes in the assessment process, which is overseen by the Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee.

#### Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs

The University has policies related to the definition and offering of continuing education and noncredit offerings at UAA and the community campuses.

#### **Standard 2.D – Student Support Resources**

All members of the University of Alaska Anchorage community expressed a commitment to students and student success. They consistently report coming together around the UAA 2020 plan and understanding the challenges that face their diverse student body. Student Affairs units, including enrollment management and resources for Alaska Native students, reported working with faculty and others in academic affairs toward common goals.

This commitment to student success was particularly evident to the evaluation team around academic advising. Because of poor retention and graduation rates, UAA has been implementing different tools and staffing models to increase educational persistence and degree attainment. During the last seven years, degree audit tools have improved student access to information and messaging to students about full-time enrollment and access to student support services has increased. The evaluation team acknowledges the recent development of a Student Success unit and the hiring of first year academic advisers and understands the campus commitment and excitement about this investment. The coordination between first year – or exploratory – advising and the academic advising in the colleges and departments must remain a priority. *Concern: The inconsistency of advising, both in terms of standards and in implementation, are resulting in inconsistent messages and service to students. Colleges and campuses need to continue their work on establishing an overarching structure for advising systems and be uniformly committed to the training and professional development of advisers.*

There is solid evidence that academic advising is connected to other student affairs units, including disability resources for students, the student care team, and orientation. The move in 2019 to connect orientation with academic advising and class registration is a best practice.

Communication with students about academic programs and advising appears robust, both in the catalog and via UAA webpages. *Suggestion: The evaluation team suggests that the institution ensure timely communication with the advising staff, especially in relation to changes or eliminations in academic programs.*

Other enrollment information, including financial aid, is available for students. The new leadership in enrollment management is thinking strategically about connections with local communities and how UAA can deliver on its promises to students, particularly Alaska Natives. There is a good understanding in admissions and enrollment about the challenges in recruiting and retaining students from Alaska, especially within the context of being an open-access institution. There is not a culture of college attainment in the state and several staff described UAA students as “loan averse.” While the solutions to these problems are not obvious or easy, the committee compliments student affairs, including enrollment services, for their consistent understanding of the challenges and their commitment to a purpose; we suggest continuing to think about innovative ways to support students, financially and otherwise, throughout their educational journey.

Consistency of services for students is another strong theme in UAA. The evaluation team encourages the continued work of bringing together Alaska Native resources, including academic courses, outreach, and support services, into one coordinated center. We appreciated learning that a center is a high fundraising priority for the campus.

The student affairs team is knowledgeable about the diversity of the student body, both in terms of ethnic and culture background as well as age and family status. As a result, they are thinking about different kinds of support and engagement, including understanding that academic experiential learning might be the main kind of co-curricular involvement for UAA students. In addition to campus clubs and residential housing, student affairs staff help students connect with undergraduate research, community engagement, and other opportunities that emerge from academic units, like fieldwork or internships.

On-campus housing is relatively new at the UAA Anchorage campus but is not yet at capacity. Students report having a good experience with living in the residence halls, but acknowledge it is expensive and not a good fit for all types of students. There is alignment emerging from student affairs in thinking about the learning outcomes and a common curriculum for students living in residence. It is seen as one of several ways to connect students to each other and the institution in order to increase academic persistence.

Online courses (distance education) are common at UAA, partly because of the large service area, but also because of the commitment to allowing as many students as possible access to the courses and programs of their choice. Policies and technologies are in place to support this and students reported the process as “seamless.”

Health and safety of students is a priority for UAA. The university is in compliance with requirements and has tools to allow students, faculty, and staff to report concerns. UAA was on the forefront of mental health services and the evaluation team compliments them on their student care team model. Prominent on the Dean of Students website is both the student handbook and the report about students of concern; wellness and success go hand in hand.

## **Standard 2.E – Library and Information Resources**

The UAA/Alaska Pacific University [APU] Consortium Library serves students, faculty, staff, and the public through a joint facility and with shared resources. The agreement between University of

Alaska Anchorage and Alaska Pacific University ensures APU provides some financial support for library staff and operations as well as the land upon which the facility was constructed. From the onset of this partnership, APU was included in governance, with APU faculty members joining UAA faculty members in serving on the UAA's Faculty Senate library committee.

Until the recent financial downturn, the library's resources were comprehensive and provided solid support for faculty, staff, and students. Over the past 5 years, the library has seen budget reductions by nearly \$2 million dollars, which is significant when one considers that during the same period, library inflation on periodicals and databases averaged about 6% per year. This declining resource base is being felt by faculty and graduate students, as evidenced by the data collected in the 2017 LibQUAL+ survey that identified dissatisfaction with adequate library resources. *Concern: Reduced funding for the consortium library has affected the library's ability to support faculty, staff and students in the areas of teaching and learning as well as research and scholarship.*

Consistent with its mission and Core Themes, the Consortium Library engages with other libraries and agencies to share resources and expertise to library users throughout Alaska and globally. This is evidenced by the library's support of the Alaska Library Network, the library's participation in ARLIS (Alaska Resources Library and Information Services) and its participation in Alaska Digital Archives, among other agreements.

The Consortium Library relies heavily on LibQUAL+ for assessment. LibQUAL+ is a nationally normed library survey that measures user perceptions of three areas of library services: library as place, impact of service, and information control. Administered by the Association of Research Libraries, the Consortium Library surveys its users (faculty, staff, and students of both UAA and APU) every three years and uses the data to inform its priorities. Examples of changes made based on this survey include re-establishing a subscription to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, expanding library hours, and opening the northern entrance.

Most of the library faculty are engaged with teaching and learning, with sixteen librarians serving as subject liaisons. Recently, the library added a new instructional design librarian to advance its capacity to work with teaching faculty. Through participation in key faculty governance committee work, the library faculty have successfully partnered with teaching faculty to develop and refine information literacy and critical thinking skills into programmatic student learning outcomes. Interviews and LibQUAL+ survey results confirm the perception that library faculty have made a positive contribution to student success.

The library has been heavily engaged in a review of its resources because of its recent budget challenges. This has led to a five-year program of review and reduction in the areas of collections and services. One area of note is that, due to the independent planning of the community campuses, staffing may affect the quality of service to some sites. One site, for example, decided to fill a vacant librarian position with a staff person. This may be a natural choice, given the changing nature of library services and collections. However, it was not a consultative process, and this might be an area for further policy development to ensure that students at all UAA sites are provided with equitable access to library resources.

The Consortium Library recently opened the north entrance to the facility to respond to user demand. This additional service required a new staffing point to ensure the security of collections. Based on observation and interviews, other collections within the facility are also secured through thoughtfully designed service points.

## **Standard 2.F – Financial Resources**

UAA has maintained its financial stability through \$19.7 million in budget reductions, which equates to a 14.6% reduction in state support over the past three years due to slowdowns in the state economy as a result of lower than expected oil prices. However, the institution has demonstrated effective cash flow management to support the institutional mission and UA System strategic priorities. The university receives oversight of cash management activities from the UA System Office of Cash Management which include monitoring both present and future cash reserves, evaluating risk in investments, and authorizing checks greater than \$100,000 as required by operating procedures. Additionally, at the institutional level, the Chancellor's Cabinet provides oversight to cash flow from quarterly unused allocations reports, prepared by the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services, to cover temporary shortages and emerging initiatives throughout the year.

Resource planning at UAA is engaging, collaborative and focuses both current and future financial need. The UAA 2020 enrollment goals are essential indicators for the university's mission and fiscal health, because of the connection to state funding and tuition revenue. The Board of Regents establishes tuition rates and approves increases. Tuition has grown in significance as a source of revenue at more than 27% of operating revenue.

The significance of governmental support at UAA cannot be overstated. Approximately 60% of the operational budget funding, including support for many mission-critical services, are dependent on federal, state, and other grants and contracts. Recent changes in particular state funding allocations have the potential to impact UAA's operations significantly. The institution hopes to mitigate this risk by offsetting reduced state funding with increased tuition and new enrollment targets outlined in UAA 2020. Led by the Director of Sponsored Programs, planning for future grants, including proposal development, are carefully vetted and prioritized by the university's executive team, within the context of UAA's mission and core themes. UAA has successfully engaged the faculty to increase the number of grant proposals submitted. However, the total number of research grants received has yet to increase. According to the faculty, more support is needed for inexperienced faculty members to become successful in securing research grants.

UAA policies and procedures guide its budget development and financial planning which are established at the system level and followed by all campuses. The budget development process is outlined in the UA Board of Regents' Policies and Regulations. The Planning and Budget Advisory Council (PBAC) advises the Chancellor's Cabinet regarding financial decisions through a broad cross-section of campus stakeholders which include academic affairs (i.e., faculty, deans), student affairs (dean of students, Alaska Native leadership), and administrative services (i.e., auxiliary services, budget office) through regularly scheduled meetings. The PBAC sets UAA apart from their peers in the level of engagement in the budget process and serves as a direct communication channel back to the units being represented on the decisions made. The draft budget is then presented to the System President in September to develop a unified general appropriation request for approval of the Board of Regents before being sent to the governor and state legislature. During the budget process, UAA receives authorization from the Board of Regents to raise tuition rates to offset the reductions in state fiscal support.

UAA utilizes Banner Finance as its accounting management information system. The accounting system integrates with the Banner student information system and human resource system to track activities at a system-wide level. The UA System's Accounting and Administrative Manual outlines a detailed, comprehensive system of internal budget controls which adhere to accepted government accounting principles and require the institution to compile financial statements for annual audits.

UAA's Campus Master Plan provides the primary structure for capital planning and budgeting efforts, which is reviewed every 5 to 7 years. The current plan (approved in 2013) was extended by the Board of Regents in May 2017 until after the NWCCU Accreditation and the completion of the UAA 2020 Strategic Plan in order to re-prioritize planning efforts based on shifts in learning community needs. UAA has not utilized debt to fund their operation budget, and the UA System Office of Administration carefully governs all debt required for capital projects. One area of challenge identified by the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services was the growing amount of deferred maintenance caused by reductions in state support on existing buildings. Currently, the UA System has over \$1 billion in deferred maintenance to be addressed. UAA has carefully assessed and prioritized these needs to minimize the effects on the mission fulfillment and operational readiness. All capital projects that require debt are regularly reviewed to ensure adequate resources for the current debt levels and the ability to identify sufficient resources to service future debt created by new capital projects.

UAA operates several auxiliary enterprises including "Student Housing, Dining and Conference Services, Student Health and Counseling Services, Bookstore, Parking Services, the Alaska Airlines Center, and Williamson Auditorium" (Seven Year Self Study, p. 83). Each of these auxiliary services is considered material to the operation of the institution and has its own operating budget within the general fund and is governed by Board of Regent Policy 05.15 and the University of Alaska Accounting and Administrative Manual for auxiliary funds.

The UA System undergoes an annual financial audit that covers each of the universities and is conducted by a group of independent external auditors. These audits are performed in accordance with the accepted government auditing standards. Audit results, including all finding and recommendation letters, are shared with the Board of Regents Audit Committee. The President or a representative provides an update to the Board of Regents on an ongoing basis regarding the status of addressing any findings or recommendations. For the most current audit period (ending June 30, 2017), the net position of the university was reduced by \$8.7 million or 1 percent primarily as a result of the use of bond proceeds for capital building projects (FY 17 Financial Statement, p. 2). The results of the audit indicated that there were no deficiencies identified in the university's internal controls or instances of non-compliance with laws, regulations, or grant and contract requirements. Because of consistently strong audit history, the institution was determined to be a low-risk auditee as defined in OMB Circular A-133.

The fundraising activities at UAA receive oversight by the UA Foundation and are outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which details the responsibilities in requesting and receiving private gifts from corporate, local, national and individual contributions. The institution ensures these activities are completed in a professional and ethical manner by adhering to the relevant policies of Board of Regents, the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). On the UAA campus, the Vice

Chancellor for University Advancement and the Office of University Development have the primary responsibility to organize fundraising at various levels of the institution in a hybrid model of central and decentralized activities. An annual fundraising plan with goals is created to ensure alignment between the university's mission, core themes, needs of individual colleges, and donor affinity.

## **Standard 2.G – Physical and Technological Infrastructure**

### Physical Infrastructure

UAA provides physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure and sufficient in quantity and quality to meet the needs of the campus community. The university's physical assets include 71 buildings on the Anchorage campus and 33 buildings on the four community campuses for a total of 3.2 million square feet. UAA demonstrated adequate classroom space, administrative space, and community space that support the institution's mission and core themes while its 354 acres provide room for future expansion. UAA has several residential locations near the Anchorage campus identified to be purchased if they become available for sale. Because the oldest buildings on campus are nearly fifty years old, the UAA Facilities and Operation team inspects all campus buildings on a monthly basis to evaluate deferred maintenance priorities and code violations. Additionally, periodic laboratory audits are performed on a monthly basis by the Environmental Safety staff to identify irregularities and potential risks.

Each UAA building is assigned a trained Safety Coordinator to ensure students, staff, faculty, and visitors are safe while on campus and to facilitate communication regarding maintenance needs, safety drills, and as a part of an early alert system during a disaster or crisis. During the campus tour it was discovered that UAA also provides all students nighttime escorts upon request and has ensured the campus is well lit to reduce crime. Given the remote nature of many UAA campuses, the Emergency Operations Plan addresses the likely delays in emergency response time.

In an effort to be responsive to the growing need to ensure a safe and healthy environment, UAA has expanded the Environmental Health and Safety, Risk Management Support, and Emergency Management (EHS) staff to include a Chemical Hygiene Officer (CHO) to engage the learning community (i.e., faculty, staff, students, safety committees) in reducing risks and promoting best practices. The institution has established maintenance schedules and a work order system that supports timely and appropriate action in the case of a deficiency.

UAA's safe use, storage and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials is guided by the Board of Regents' Policy 05.09.040 and UAA Hazardous Materials Management Policy. These two policies outline the procurement and proper usage of hazardous and toxic materials at the institution. UAA practices align with best practices of all state, federal and municipal requirements governing the use of these materials. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) (i.e., Material Safety Data Sheets) are readily available online through UAA's subscription to CISPro to all faculty, staff, and students who use these materials (<https://cisprolive1.chemswlive.com/saasmgt/login.asp>). The institution has limited the use of hazardous materials to the smallest amount possible and qualified for a Conditionally Exemption Small Quality Generator (CESQG) status. UAA regularly reviews their practices to ensure this status is maintained.

UAA's Campus Master Plan provides the primary structure for capital planning and budgeting

efforts, which is reviewed every 5 to 7 years. The Board of Regents extended the current plan (approved in 2013) in May 2017 until after the NWCCU Accreditation and the completion of the UAA 2020 Strategic Plan in order to re-prioritize planning efforts based on shifts in learning community needs. In 2016, the University Hub was created to relocate admissions, recruiting, and some enrollment management functions from the University Center to the main campus. UAA has had several student service units located several miles off campus and provides a shuttle for students to access critical areas like the financial aid office. The institution hopes to move all student service functions on the main campus eventually. UAA's Child Care Taskforce was charged to provide recommendations for the needs of both students and staff. In January of 2015, the childcare center located on campus run by Tanaina Child Development Center for 35 years was relocated. The next master plan should reassess the need for childcare based on the demographics of students and staff. UAA was one of the first institutions in the state to place a Mamava Lactation Pod in the Student Union after receiving a grant from the Alaska Workplace Breastfeeding Support Project in 2017. Recently, the UAA Disability Support Services Center was also relocated to provide better facilities for students with disabilities and ensure equal access.

UAA has not utilized debt to fund their operation budget, and the UA System Office of Administration carefully governs all financial liability incurred for capital projects. One area of challenge identified by the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services was the growing amount of deferred maintenance caused by reductions in state support on existing buildings. Currently, the UA System has over \$1 billion in deferred maintenance to be addressed. UAA has carefully assessed and prioritized these needs to minimize the effects on the mission fulfillment and operational readiness. All capital projects requiring debt, funding is regularly reviewed to ensure adequate resources for the current debt levels and the ability to identify sufficient resources to service future debt created by new capital projects.

UAA's equipment is adequate to support their mission and core themes including effective teaching and learning, student success, and advanced research. The institution's funding model for equipment is based on both central and college level resources. This funding approach has allowed UAA to add several new buildings during the accreditation cycle "including the Mat-Su College Paramedic/Nursing Laboratory Addition, the Kenai Peninsula College Career and Technical Center, and the Engineering and Industry Building and Health Sciences Building on the Anchorage campus" ( Seven Year Self Study, p. 86). UAA's focus on state of the art technology equipment is closely aligned to the regional and state workforce development needs which include maritime workers (Kodiak/Homer), millwright jobs (Prince William Sound), paramedics (Mat-Su), ultrasound technicians, medical assistants, and dental assisting assistants. Close partnerships with local industry leaders have led to successful philanthropic effort in ensuring the necessary funding is in place for funding this type of equipment.

UAA has established two unique pre-college programs in Alaska Middle College School (2013) and Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) Middle School Academy (2010). These programs align closely with the mission by reaching Alaska Native students and promoting college readiness throughout the state. The institution has designated a specific building for the instruction and a particular floor in a residence hall for ANSEP students to ensure safety. Overall, all classroom and instructional equipment is up-to-date and supports a variety of instructional delivery methods including field work and faculty/student research. *Suggestion: UAA should review new ways of delivering live remote instruction to provide more flexibility in course catalog*

*offering outside of the main campus as requested during the student forum.*

### Technological Infrastructure

As the largest university in Alaska and with community campuses offering instruction through the region, the technology infrastructure requirements are both critical and complex in order to safely serve the needs of its students, staff, and faculty. The comprehensive technical structure which also serves a rapidly growing segment of distant learners relies on adequate administrative capacity and system functions for instruction and access to the necessary student support services remotely online. UA System provides the overall governance and project management for this technical infrastructure through the Office of Information Technology (IT). UAA Information Technology Services (ITS) and the Chief Information Officer (CIO) work closely with the system staff to ensure that telecommunications, network infrastructure, and academic technology systems remain safe, updated, and online.

When technical issues with the institution's technology arise, the system staff support UAA in identifying the cause, scope of the problem, and implementing the solution.

In addition to the local datacenter on the main campus, UAA has demonstrated adequate support and planning for the proper storage and disaster recovery planning to prevent data losses. Critical data has been backed up nightly at a secure data center in Hillsboro, Oregon. Additionally, students, staff, and faculty can utilize their university credentials to back up their data using Office 365 and Google via cloud storage. In February 2018, a data breach impacted dozens of current and former students, faculty, and staff (associated press, 2018, Seattle Times, <https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/data-breach-at-university-of-alaska-impacts-staff-students>). A vulnerability was exploited in the university's password reset tool and data collected from student's social media accounts.

During our site visit, it was determined that the institution took both timely and appropriate actions to resolve the data breach and effectively communicate to those impacted. Recent additions (i.e., each campus now has a CIO separate from the UA System CIO, interviews are currently in progress) to the UA System IT leadership structure have been made to enhance prioritization and coordinate of each of the campuses' unique needs. *Suggestion: While the networking speed is currently scheduled to be upgraded for most UAA buildings on the main campus, the committee suggests that network connections to the community campus buildings be evaluated to better support increased networking demands of video conferencing and remote instruction.*

Instruction and support is the responsibility of the UAA IT Services Call Center for all faculty, staff and students regarding issue resolution and training for technology solutions. Staffing of the Call Center is daily with representatives at each of the community colleges as well. Additional technical assistance is provided in UAA computer labs staffed by IT consultants with advanced issues referred to UAA IT Services Call Center. One of the success metrics of the UAA IT Services Call Center is over 90 percent of the 13,000 service request for the past year were resolved during the first contact. This level of effective resolution ensures students and staff are minimally impacted by technology issues related to student information systems, instructional applications, and financial accounting system.

Distance learning students are one of the fastest growing populations at the institution. Recently,

the UA system moved Blackboard, the learning management system, to a single instance for all of the universities in the system. This project significantly enhanced the course offering options for distance learners and streamlined the process. Faculty members are provided adequate support in best practice standards for distance learning course development by the Academic Innovations and e-Learning group. This group offers professional development training opportunities to faculty wishing to incorporate new technologies into their teaching.

Technological infrastructure planning is coordinated by the System Chief Information Officer Management Team (i.e., each of the three university's CIO and the UA System CIO) at both the institutional and system level. Institutionally, UAA's University Technology Council provides governance and strategic planning to prioritize both technology needs and to advise on implementation strategies. The Council is composed of UAA CIO and includes deans and campus directors selected by the UAA Chancellor for up to two year appointments. This planning model provides strong coordination between the UA System and campus level resources to adequately support departmental needs, the fulfillment of UAA mission and core themes. The System CIO Management Team website (<https://www.alaska.edu/oit/itgovernance/cmt/>) did not appear to have current members or upcoming meetings scheduled. *Suggestion: the committee suggests that UAA update the website with current membership (i.e., the site only lists 2017, 2012-2017 membership) and future meetings (i.e., upcoming meeting listed as May 22, 2018).*

Technology planning at the institution is governed by the UAA Master Plan of Technology Updates and Replacements. The plan addresses future technology growth and sustainability within the context of student, faculty and staff needs. The institution also maintains a technology replacement schedule that guides replacement and upgrades to communications systems, computers, and file servers. This plan ensures a stable technical infrastructure and institutional operations by confirming sufficient personnel and funding resources in place for high priority projects.

### **Standard 3 – Planning and Assessment**

#### **Standard 3.A – Institutional Planning**

The Institutional Research office has created and maintained a rich data warehouse available to all academic and executive leadership. The *IR-Reports* is published continuously and provides an in depth review of various data sources. The Office of Institutional Research has created a dashboard that provides access to key performance indicators that also allows the user to go in depth on requested data areas. Much improvement of the user-friendliness of the data available to decision makers has expanded the ability to use this information in regular decision making processes.

#### **Standard 3.B – Core Theme Planning**

The evaluation team found evidence that UAA engages in careful and substantive planning for its Core Themes and mission fulfillment.

##### Core Theme 1 – Teaching and Learning

The planning for Teaching and Learning has been ongoing during the last decade. The *UAA 2017*

plan specifically addressed this area in the priority to “Strengthen and Develop the Total UAA Instructional Program.” Implementation plans that directly relate to this core theme have included the institutional and college-level planning and budgeting processes. These processes have targeted funds to key academic programs, academic advising, and innovative curriculum design. This was especially true in the Program Prioritization process that occurred from 2013-2015.

The planning for teaching and learning improvements has been guided by the collection of appropriately defined data that relate to the accomplishment of core theme objectives. A prime example of this was the Core Theme Indicator Assessment (CTIA) Instrument, which was reviewed by Student Governance and the Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee for this core theme. Overall, the learning outcomes assessment processes are set up in a way that encourages departments and programs to “close the loop,” and this analysis guides future assessment cycles. In addition, there has been extensive outreach to external partners to identify state workforce needs.

### Core Theme 2 – Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity [3B]

Similar to the first core theme, planning for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity has been an institutional priority for many years. The *UAA 2017* plan emphasized the need to “Reinforce and Rapidly Expand [UAA’s] Research Mission,” as well as enhance its “capacity for competitive sponsored research and greatly expand the number and value of externally-sourced research grants.”

The Vice Provost’s Research Council has been the body that has coordinated the implementation of the *Strategic Research Plan*. This plan captures the effective planning and resource allocation connected with the key elements of this core theme. The Provost has worked with the Deans to enhance the alignment of program resources in order to further research priorities.

### Core Theme 3 – Student Success

Student Success was demonstrated during the evaluation site visit to be the focus of many of UAA’s planning processes. For example, we interviewed several recent hires in positions directly responsible for student success as defined in the objectives and indicators, and these individuals were active in collaboratively carrying out meaningful and significant planning processes across the campus, specifically directed to provide better coordination in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. For example, a first-year advising program was planned, and is currently being implemented, along with new curriculum in student success classes and training for faculty focused on lower division courses with high failure rates. The planning was consistent and active, including several faculty committees, administrators, and student affairs employees. UAA demonstrated that it substantially restructured planning processes to promote its student success objectives.

During the review period, UAA engaged in a systematic effort to better align Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to support its student success objectives. A substantial investment was made to create two high-level positions dedicated to coordinating planning for Alaska Native students and all student success. These positions have received strong support from administration, leading to significant planning to reorganize and improve delivery of curriculum and advising, in particular in the first two years.

UAA demonstrated that during the review period it developed substantially improved data resources for use by leadership and the entire campus to evaluate Student Success efforts. The IR reports and dashboards were improved considerably, specifically in connection with the Student Success objectives and indicators. Additionally, leaders and advisors demonstrated using multiple additional data resources, such as EAB and SCC, which contribute robust data that are being used to address all of the student success objectives, including access and enrollment, as well as retention and time to degree. The adoption of a mobile app for students, Seawolf Tracks, delivers key data to students directly to inform their own success actions.

#### Core Theme 4 - Community

The institution engages in formal planning to ensure the fulfillment of Core Theme 4. A significant portion of the Core Theme 4 planning effort revolves around UAA's contributions to community through its fiscal stability. The institution uses four measures to assess the university's success in managing a sustainable budget and to assist with planning. Analysis of data related to instructional and student related expenditures, which show UAA actuals consistently falling below targets, have resulted in concrete actions toward remediation including UAA's decision to participate in EAB's Academic Performance Solutions. All four measures for this indicator provide evidence both of the detrimental effect of Alaska's declining oil revenue and high cost of living on the UAA budget along with a variety of approaches UAA is taking to offset them. Although the university's hybrid RCM budget model has not been fully evaluated since its implementation over 10 years ago, such an evaluation is envisioned by UAA over the coming years.

#### Core Theme 5 – Public Square

Throughout the Seven Year Site Visit, team members were provided evidence through interviews that the institution engages in thoughtful and systematic planning for its Public Square commitment. Nearly every university center and activity has linked its objectives and planning to the Public Square focus. The Center for Community Engagement and Learning, as an example, has its own strategic plan and objectives that support Public Square goals. The Center for Community Engagement and Learning identifies "Resilient Communities" as a theme, and it maintains six areas for engagement that draw upon and integrate academic areas from across the University. The institution has also incorporated community engagement activities into its tenure and promotion processes, though the communication of this latter planning effort was not consistent throughout the colleges.

#### **Standard 4.A and 4.B – Assessment and Improvement**

UAA's institutional mechanisms for assessment and improvement are well-established and integrated into the culture of the institution. The site visit confirmed the high level of campus engagement in assessment as represented in the Self-Study. UAA's overall commitment, execution and improvement culture is commendable.

## **Core Theme 1 – Teaching and Learning**

### Assessment:

The assessment processes surrounding the focus on teaching and learning at UAA have been robust. For the first indicator, data showed that students meet or exceed faculty expectations for at least 90 percent of program outcomes. Undergraduate course pass rates have risen in recent years to 73 percent for lower division courses, and 88.5 percent for upper division courses. Although trending in the right direction, comparisons conducted through Education Advisory Board's (EAB) Academic Performance Solutions (APS) indicate that these pass rates are significantly below the pass rates of similar institutions tracked by EAB.

UAA's Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee has diligently led the efforts to track program level student learning outcomes. In addition to the high percentages of student learning outcomes that met or exceeded expectations, the committee has also documented effective examples of many programs that have "closed the loop" with their assessment results. For example, the Bachelor of Social Work program observed that scores on the Area Concentration Achievement Test for Social Work were lower than desired. After making a number of targeted curriculum changes, the student scores for the practice area increased from the 62<sup>nd</sup> percentile to the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile.

For the Core Theme objective of "UAA academic programs meet state needs", the University has been tracking total degrees and certificates awarded with emphasis on high-demand job areas. Data indicated that programs in these high demand areas produced 72 percent of the total 19,500 awards conferred by UAA during the accreditation period. Health, business, and education produced 70 percent of these high demand degrees. Engineering and natural resources are two fields that are growing rapidly.

Another indicator being tracked is total student credit hours. These have been in decline each year since 2012, with 333,000 student credit hours attempted in AY17. The decline in student credit hours has not been as steep as the enrollment decline. This is largely due to increasing numbers of full-time students and a 27.3 percent increase in eLearning over the seven-year accreditation period.

### Improvement:

In addition to the "closing the loop" efforts referenced above, another significant improvement has been the refinement of placement policies. This has resulted in a recent increase in pass rates for college-level English. Academic Performance Solutions is being used to reduce bottleneck challenges, and course redesign principles have been implemented to address courses with high DFW rates. The redesign of BIOL A108 Principles and Methods in Biology is a great example of curriculum improvements that can be used as a template for other courses. Supplemental instruction, a tutor center, and faculty in residence programs have all received Annual Fund for Excellence grants in order to enhance student success.

Faculty development initiatives for improvement have been spearheaded by UAA's Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence (CAFE), the Center for Community Engagement and Learning

(CCEL), and Academic Innovations and eLearning (AI&e). Prominent among these efforts are the large number of workshops focusing on learning outcomes assessment that have been offered by CAFE, in conjunction with the Office of Academic Affairs and the Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee. The support and training offered for both general education assessment and program learning outcome assessment have been remarkable. Interviews on campus revealed that this has been a faculty-driven process, not an administrative-driven process. A culture of assessment and curriculum mapping has developed, and more assignments are intentionally aligned with learning outcomes. Cross-campus collaborations have been strong, with each of the five campuses involved.

Course improvement in eLearning has also been significant. UAA has benefited from a \$2.5 million Department of Education Title III grant to enhance the quantity and quality of its distance education offerings. Quality Matters (QM) has provided a framework for making many of these improvements. A current priority for this grant is developing master course shells for high-enrollment general education courses.

Institutional leaders have a good sense for the next areas for focus and growth. UAA wants to spend more time tracking non-degree seeking students, which make up 30 percent of the student population. Promoting and assessing high impact practices are another priority, and UAA can build upon the ePortfolio initiative that they have started that supports Alaska Native students.

## **Core Theme 2 – Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity**

### Assessment:

The first indicator for this Core Theme is the number and dollar amounts of proposals submitted and awarded grants, contracts, and sponsored activities in research, scholarship, and creative activities. The number of grant proposals submitted increased 19.5 percent during the accreditation cycle, although the actual number dropped during the last two years. The total dollar amount of grant proposals increased 33 percent during the same period, with a peak in FY2016 at \$40.7 million. The target for this indicator is “continuous improvement,” which would be stronger with a more specific goal.

Federal funding was the largest provider of grant awards, but this decreased from 60 percent of grants in 2010 to 44 percent in 2017. The three largest sources of federal funding were the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Science Foundation, and the US Department of Homeland Security. Private funding has risen dramatically, and now constitutes almost a quarter of grant awards. INNOVATE Awards, in which UAA support was able to provide the preparatory foundation for larger grant proposals, received federal funding 49 percent of the time, which is double the national average. INNOVATE projects have produced the university’s four start-up companies.

The second indicator for this core theme is the annual amount of grant-funded operating and capital research expenditures on research and administrative support (direct and indirect) from restricted research grants. Data from the last seven years indicated that research expenditures increased 37.2 percent. Actual expenditures had exceeded targets during six of the past seven years, but more detail could have been provided on how these targets were set. Much of the growth in research

expenditures came from the Artic Domain Awareness Center that received a \$17.5 million grant from the Department of Homeland Security. UAA also has a \$20 million grant to create an American Indian-Alaskan Native Clinical Translation Research Center.

### Improvement:

As noted above, the INNOVATE awards have significantly raised the research profile at UAA. The INNOVATE awards have had a 6-to-1 return on investment in the 75 projects that have been funded since 2011. The Office of Research and Graduate Studies leads such efforts on campus, and research activities are further supported by the Faculty Senate Research and Creative Activity Committee. In regards to the research infrastructure, the university has also opened buildings focused on science, health, and engineering, which will facilitate continued research growth and outcomes that will benefit society. UAA's research accomplishments are disseminated in the *Innovation Frontier* publication, as well as in the annual *Performance Report*.

*Concern: One major area needing improvement is the need to track the dissemination of knowledge beyond the campus, both for individual faculty members and for the institution as a whole. No current accreditation metrics exist for this, and UAA has lacked a common, centralized collection mechanism that is automated. Recently, the university invested in the Digital Measures software that will make such tracking more feasible. This software will be useful in collecting data for tenure and promotion purposes, as well as for highlighting institutional research successes across the disciplines.*

During the institutional visit, many faculty and administrators noted the proud tradition of undergraduate research on campus. The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (OURS) spearheads these opportunities, and provides an annual Undergraduate Research and Discovery Symposium. Given the increasing focus on student success, it would be helpful to track undergraduate research more closely. In addition, the *UAA 2020* strategic plan does not clearly articulate how research, scholarship, and creative activity will be a priority in the coming years. More specific direction on research metrics and targets would guide these efforts.

## **Core Theme 3 – Student Success**

### Assessment:

With the development of improved IR reports, EAB, and SSC, UAA has significantly implemented relevant data to address the student success objectives. In interviews with faculty committees responsible for curriculum development, it was clear that the curricular changes made to promote student success were developed and approved by faculty. Moreover, UAA carried out multiple forms of assessment of its advising programs, diversity programs, and program support of student access and persistence across the review period. UAA's assessment of its courses in relationship to the student success objectives is to be commended because of the degree of the faculty involvement and thoroughness, as documented in assessment plans reviewed by the Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee and the detailed assessment reports compiled by faculty and reviewed by the colleges.

UAA consistently has made meaningful changes in the coordination of Academic Affairs and

Student Affairs to improve advising programs and create academic pathways for students. Also changes in administering financial aid and in scheduling lower-division classes have been made to support student success objectives. While the pathways in majors have always been significant in supporting student success, the lower division advising and assessment has been significantly improved, and recent developments have been launched to continue the momentum. New programs based on assessment of diversity have been launched, in particular for Alaska Native students. *Concern: In some colleges there has been some confusion reported by faculty members about their participation in advising, given the changes and improvements to advising that have been implemented and in assessments of faculty service commitments. Efforts should be made to assess and clarify faculty's role in advising.*

Regular reviews have been implemented at UAA, most recently in 2016, which led to a wholesale rethinking of UAA's commitment to student success, resulting in a bridge 2020 strategic plan that in detail reassesses the objectives for student success and the actions to be taken to achieve them. While the results cannot be assessed at this time, the 2020 strategic plan documents considerable work to coordinate support for student success that is likely to improve student retention and graduation rates, as well as diversity benchmarks.

#### Improvement:

UAA substantially reallocated resources to create several positions directly responsible for student success in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, to move Tier One and developmental classes from one college to another to support strategic restructuring, to create new advising and retention programs, to promote diversity with specific programs, to develop academic pathways, and to install programs to enhance access to UAA from Alaskan high schools and its service area more generally. *Concern: while these laudable changes were developed collaboratively across campuses, there are two issues that should be addressed: faculty perceived that the communication and rationale regarding moving the Tier One classes to the Community and Technical College was not sufficient, and staff perceived that the restructuring undertaken to create new advising positions was also not adequately communicated.*

Assessment results related to student learning and the student success objectives were used extensively to inform innovations made during the review period. At UAA the Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee directs and carries out assessment of student learning, and all its work with assessment is provided to all constituencies in exemplary fashion. The assessment is detailed and well documented and led to specific changes in support of the Student Success Theme.

### **Core Theme 4 – Community**

#### Assessment:

The indicator measuring the degree to which faculty and staff reflect Alaska's racial and ethnic diversity seeks to measure how relevant the institution is to the communities it serves. Targets are based on comparison with Alaska Census Bureau data. There continues to be a significant gap between UAA faculty and staff diversity and the ethnicity data reported by the State, with little improvement seen from 2010 to 2016 data. This indicator is closely linked to indicator One of Core Theme Three: Student Success, which seeks to measure the extent to which UAA students reflect Alaska's racial and ethnic diversity. The institution uses the LibQUAL survey as a general

satisfaction metric for faculty, staff and students.

Improvement:

Work currently being undertaken at the close of this year's self-evaluation process illustrates UAA's commitment to improving the diversity of its communities to advance the UAA mission. In particular, examples include the recommended actions in the recently adopted Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to improve the diversity of faculty and staff, including the development and commitment of resources toward 3-year diversity post-doctoral fellowships, and the designation of a proposed Alaska Native Welcome Center as the first priority of the upcoming Capital Campaign. A commendation for UAA's exhibited commitment to diversity and inclusion is included elsewhere in this report.

The use of LibQUAL survey general satisfaction questions as a metric for faculty, staff and student satisfaction evidences a consistent level of satisfaction with library support for teaching, research and learning needs, although a drop in satisfaction consistent with the recent budget cuts is seen in the most recent survey data. The commitment to community of the UAA Consortium Library is exemplified by its founding and active role in the Alaska Library Network, a 501c3 organization that currently counts 35 libraries as members.

**Core Theme 5 - Community Engagement (Public Square)**

Assessment:

The University has a number of ways to report on activities related to the community engagement core theme including annual reporting on individual projects in the *UAA Performance* document, inclusion in the UAA Fact Book, IR-Reports, and NSSE data. Utilizing a rubric developed by scholars in public scholarship, UAA assesses selected community engagement curriculum based activities by their impact, and depth, its *Partnership Portfolio*. UAA also has included community engagement in each college's faculty promotion and tenure policies. The University is to be commended for the range of projects undertaken, the level of faculty support for the program, and the institutional commitment in creating the Center for Community Engagement and Learning.

Improvement:

While the Center for Community Engagement and Learning staff seems perfectly situated to continue their successful programming, there is some concern that specific language regarding the Public Square is not placed front and center in the UAA 2020 planning document. *Concern: Recognition and cultivation of the role that community engagement activities have on student retention and success may help the Center for Community Engagement and Learning continue to be a critical part of UAA's mission in the near future.*

Faculty attending the open forum seemed a bit surprised at the fact that community engagement is in the promotion and tenure policies. Further education about this addition to the promotion and tenure process may enable more faculty members to feel they can "manage" engagement-focused courses if they know that it will count in a positive way towards their promotion and tenure.

## **Standard 5 – Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability Standard**

### **5.A – Mission Fulfillment**

A common theme throughout the Seven Year Site Visit was a comprehensive commitment to the institution’s mission, particularly in relationship to access, student success, and supporting communities. We repeatedly heard the phrase, “We know who we are here.” The institution’s planning mechanisms have engaged students, faculty and staff in a wide range of activities, and have resulted in broadly shared evidence of mission fulfillment, such as the annual publication of *UAA Performance* and the Student Achievement Data document, both of which were referenced in multiple meetings during the visit. Another common thread of the visit was UAA’s identification “as an adaptive institution, growing and changing with the needs and the fortunes of a relatively young and sparsely populated state” (UAA 2018 Self-Study, 185). As part of assessing mission fulfillment within a changing landscape, the institution has identified weaknesses in its student success initiatives that are being targeted in its new UAA 2020 strategic plan. UAA 2020 demonstrates that the institution’s planning is flexible and capable of making needed change in order to fulfill its mission expectations. All mission fulfillment reports are posted on UAA’s Institutional Effectiveness website, making them accessible to the entire UAA community. The goals of the system for the chancellor are aligned with the institution’s mission and Core Themes, and are clearly publicized at the system level (Strategic Pathways).

### **Standard 5.B – Adaptation and Sustainability**

UAA endured a state-level fiscal crisis and significant leadership turnover during the evaluation period, yet maintained its culture of assessment, refined its measures for mission fulfillment, and brought the UAA community together in an inclusive strategic planning effort. In addition, the institution has found ways to restructure to benefit students and maintain quality. The institution has demonstrated that its planning processes and resources allow it to adapt to external pressures and sustain its mission and programs.

### **Summary**

The University of Alaska Anchorage is a diverse and unique institution committed to its access, community and research mission. Over the past seven years it has exhibited resilience and sustainability while conducting its strong planning and assessment processes.

## **COMMENDATIONS**

The Evaluation Team commends the Institution for:

1. An inclusive planning process for UAA 2020, which brought the campuses together in an unprecedented joint effort focused on Student Success.
2. Its culture of diversity and inclusivity, especially in relationship to Alaska Native communities.
3. Its commitment to community engagement and the Public Square.
4. Its extensive assessment efforts related to student learning. Faculty exhibit robust ownership and leadership in assessing academic programs, and also engage proactively in the multifaceted assessment of General Education.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Evaluation Team recommends that the Institution:

- 1.) Expand efforts around institutional planning of graduate programs to demonstrate their academic quality and role in mission fulfillment. (Standard 2.C.12)
- 2.) Continue the focus on collaborative Student Success efforts to raise low graduation and retention rates and support Mission Fulfillment. (Standard 5.B.1)

## Individuals and Groups Interviewed by the Evaluation Committee

Student Forum  
Faculty Forum  
Staff Forum

Donna Aguiniga, Associate Director, Center for Community Engagement and Learning  
Carrie Aldrich, Assistant Professor, Developmental Education  
Mary Dallas Allen, Associate Professor, Social Work; Coordinator, Master of Social Work Program  
Jamie Bagley, Speaker Pro-Tempore, Union of Students of UAA  
Clare Baldwin, Vice President, Union of Students of UAA  
Fred Barlow, Dean, College of Engineering  
Jonathan Bartels, Associate Professor, Secondary Education  
Geser Bat-Erdene, President, Union of Students of UAA  
Holly Bell, Assistant Campus Director, Matanuska-Susitna College  
Andrew Bibler, Assistant Professor, Economics  
Deena Bishop, Chair, UA Board of Regents Academic and Student Affairs Committee; Superintendent, Anchorage School District  
Anna Bjartmarsdottir, Associate Professor, Library Science  
Robert Boeckmann, Professor, Psychology  
Lea Bouton, President, Alumni Association  
Page Brannon, Associate Professor, Library Science  
Jeane Breinig, Associate Vice Chancellor, Alaska Natives and Diversity  
Jennifer Brock, Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering; Second Vice President, Faculty Senate; Self-Study Tri-Chair  
Ryan Buchholdt, Interim Director, Environmental Health, Safety, and Risk Management; Director, Sustainability  
Michele Burdette-Taylor, Assistant Professor, Nursing  
Tracey Burke, Professor, Social Work  
Bruce Bustamante, Chair, Chancellor's Advisory Board  
Megan Carlson, Director, Accreditation Functions  
Renee Carter-Chapman, Senior Vice Provost, Institutional Effectiveness  
Sharon Chamard, Associate Professor, Justice; Past President, Faculty Senate  
Yvonne Chase, Assistant Professor, Human Services  
Talis Colberg, Campus Director, Matanuska-Susitna College  
Joel Condon, Director and Associate Professor, Construction and Design Technology  
Kendra Conroy, Operations Manager, Alaska Small Business Development Center; Co-Vice President, Staff Council  
Sam Cook, Associate Professor, Mathematics  
Cathy Coulter, Professor, Elementary Education  
Nathaniel Cox, Member, College of Engineering Alumni Chapter  
Quacyya Cuaresma, Chief Activities Officer, Union of Students of UAA  
Sandi Culver, Associate Vice Chancellor, Financial Services  
Tom Dalrymple, Associate Professor, Accounting  
Clare Dannenberg, Associate Professor, Linguistics  
Dave Dannenberg, Director, Academic Innovations and eLearning

Ajit Dayanandan, Professor, Finance  
John Dede, Special Assistant to the Senior Vice Provost  
Herminia Din, Professor, Art  
Shannon Donovan, Associate Professor, Environmental Studies  
Aaron Dotson, Associate Professor, Environmental Engineering; Interim Associate Dean of Research, College of Engineering  
Scott Downing, Associate Professor, English; First Vice President, Faculty Senate  
Thia Falcone, Assistant Professor, Sociology  
Jill Flanders-Crosby, Professor, Dance  
Kelly Foran, Director, TRIO Student Support Services  
Larry Foster, Professor, Mathematics; Self-Study Tri-Chair  
Alan Fugleberg, Campus Director, Kodiak College  
Gabriel Garcia, Associate Professor, Public Health  
Megan Gobeille, Assistant Professor, Developmental Education  
Rachel Graham, Associate Professor, Mathematics  
Shannon Gramse, Associate Professor, Developmental Studies  
Al Grant, Associate Professor, Occupational Safety and Health  
Virginia Groeschel, President, College of Engineering Alumni Chapter  
Songho Ha, Professor, History  
Robin Hanson, Professor, Library Science  
Travis Hedwig, Assistant Professor, Health Sciences  
Erin Hicks, Associate Professor, Astronomy  
Nate Hicks, Assistant Professor, Physics  
Ryan Hill, Associate Director, Residence Life; Past Co-President, Staff Council  
Victoria Hillwig, Executive Assistant to the Provost  
Erin Holmes, Associate Vice Provost, Institutional Research  
Annette Hornung, Assistant Professor, English  
Veronica Howard, Assistant Professor, Psychology  
Brittney Howell, Assistant Professor, Health Sciences  
Wei-Ying Hsiao, Professor, Early Childhood Education  
Dennis Humphrey, Associate Professor, English  
Jeff Jessee, Dean, College of Health; Vice Provost, Health Programs  
James Johnsen, President, UA System  
Beth Johnson, Development Officer  
Alex Jorgensen, Assembly Speaker, Union of Students of UAA  
Susan Kalina, Vice Provost, Academic Affairs; Self-Study Tri-Chair  
Ron Kamahale, Director, Human Resource Services  
George Kamberov, Interim Vice Provost, Research  
Simon Kattenhorn, Director and Professor, Geological Sciences  
Katharine Kelsey, Postdoctoral Fellow, Biological Sciences  
Carrie King, Professor, Dietetics and Nutrition  
Sarah Kirk, Professor, Developmental Education  
Dan Kline, Director, General Education; Professor, English  
Cindy Knall, Associate Professor, Medical Education  
Rose Kruger, Sergeant-At-Arms, Union of Students of UAA  
Jodee Kuden, Professor, Library Science  
Claudia Lampman, Vice Provost, Student Success

Sharon LaRue, Associate Professor, Aviation Technology  
Loren Leman, Chair, School of Nursing Advisory Board; Member and Past Chair, College of Engineering Advisory Board  
Beth Leonard, Director and Professor, Alaska Native Studies  
Brenda Levesque, Programs Coordinator, Physical Therapist Assistant, Occupational Therapy, and Dietetics and Nutrition Programs; Co-President, Staff Council  
Natalie Lowman, Member, Chancellor's Advisory Board  
Theresa Lyons, Executive Director, Student Outreach and Transition  
Emily Madsen, Assistant Professor, English  
Kim Mahoney, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor, Facilities and Campus Services  
David McCallister, Member, Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Board  
Vanessa Meade, Assistant Professor, Social Work  
Kat Milligan-Myhre, Assistant Professor, Biological Sciences  
Deborah Mole, Professor, Library Science  
John Moore, Research Laboratory Manager, College of Arts and Sciences; Co-President, Staff Council  
Anita Moore-Nall, Postdoctoral Fellow, Public Health  
Rebecca Moorman, Associate Professor, Library Science  
Ben Morton, Dean of Students  
John Mouracade, Dean, University Honors College  
Mike Mueller, Professor, Secondary Education  
Glenna Muncy, Director, Parking Services  
Kathy Murray, Professor, Library Science  
William Myers, Professor, History  
Heather Nash, Associate Director, Academic Innovations and eLearning  
Terry Nelson, Associate Professor, Leadership; Graduate Programs Director, College of Business and Public Policy  
Gloria O'Neill, Chair, Board of Regents; President/CEO, Cook Inlet Tribal Council  
Kristen Ogilvie, Assistant Professor, Anthropology  
Megan Olson, Vice Chancellor, University Advancement  
Soren Orley, Associate Professor, Accounting  
Judith Owens-Manley, Director, Center for Community Engagement and Learning  
Adam Paulick, Associate Vice Chancellor, Information Technology Services  
Sandra Pence, Professor, Dental Hygiene  
John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
Valerie Robideaux, Director, First Year Advising and Student Success  
Mike Robinson, Professor, Library Science  
Steve Rollins, Dean, Consortium Library  
Karen Roth, Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Development  
Denise Runge, Dean, Community and Technical College  
Cathy Sandeen, Chancellor  
Arlene Schmuland, Professor, Library Science  
Bruce Schultz, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs  
Ginny Shank, Member, Kodiak College Advisory Council  
Beverly Shuford, Vice Chancellor, Administrative Services  
Cheryl Siemers, Assistant Campus Director, Kenai Peninsula College  
Rebecca Skinner, Member and Past Chair, Kodiak College Advisory Council

John Stalvey, Interim Provost  
Kendra Sticka, Associate Professor, Dietetics and Nutrition; Director, College of Health Student Success  
Mike Swanson, Student Retention Advisor, Matanuska-Susitna College; Co-Vice President, Staff Council  
Garrison Theroux, Chief Financial Officer, Union of Students of UAA  
Andre Thorn, Director, Multicultural Center  
Kelly Thorngren, Director, Budget  
Kathi Trawver, Associate Professor, Social Work  
Gary Turner, Campus Director, Kenai Peninsula College  
Lora Volden, Associate Vice Chancellor, Enrollment Services  
David Weaver, Director, University Housing, Dining, and Conference Services  
Shawnalee Whitney, Director, Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence  
Maria Williams, Professor, Music; President, Faculty Senate  
Deanne Woodard, Associate Dean for University Studies, Community and Technical College  
Teresa Wrobel, Government Relations Officer, Union of Students of UAA