



UNIVERSITY *of* ALASKA
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University Response to Mid-Cycle Peer Evaluation Report

Submitted by
Sean Parnell, Chancellor

Submitted to
The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
November 8, 2021



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Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
8060 165th Avenue NE
Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Dr. Ramaswamy,

The University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) submitted its Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report on August 26 and virtually hosted a team of two evaluators from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities on October 7-8. This letter is in response to the evaluators' Mid-Cycle Evaluation report, received from the Commission on October 28, 2021.

We wish to thank the evaluators for their thoughtful review. The UAA community appreciated the experience, expertise, and professionalism of the evaluators, and we are grateful, in particular, for the leadership of the chair, Dr. Constance Tucker.

I recently accepted the role of chancellor at UAA, and I am honored to have had the opportunity to participate in this important evaluation process. It was gratifying to hear from the evaluators that UAA faculty and staff demonstrated a common understanding of and commitment to UAA's mission to transform lives, and that they demonstrated a "lived commitment to students." Our new strategic plan *UAA 2025* has as its first aspiration "We put students first," and I am extremely proud that the evaluators recognized our shared commitment to student learning and student success.

UAA takes ongoing continuous improvement seriously. While UAA has long used data in its informal and formal evaluation, planning, decision-making, and resource allocation processes, the new NWCCU standards have inspired us to further align our processes through the use of a small set of disaggregated institutionally-meaningful metrics, to ensure that student success and the closing of equity gaps are at the forefront of what we do. In addition, we continue to refine our robust processes of assessing academic programs and support services, including student success initiatives.

UAA appreciates the several compliments in the evaluators' report. The evaluators also identified some areas for UAA to consider. I am grateful for that guidance, and we have already started to explore improvements and clarifications in these areas.

UAA wishes to express its gratitude to the evaluators, the NWCCU staff, and the Board of Commissioners. The mid-cycle self-evaluation report, the site visit, and the evaluators' report serve as a meaningful formative assessment that will guide UAA in making improvements as we move forward in meeting our mission to transform the lives of our students and to serve our communities and our state.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sean Parnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sean" and last name "Parnell" clearly distinguishable.

Sean Parnell, Chancellor

Cc: Members of the Chancellor's Cabinet
Susan Kalina, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Institutional Effectiveness
Accreditation Advisory Committee