University of Alaska Anchorage

Ad Hoc Report to Address Recommendations 1 and 2 from the

NWCCU Fall 2018 Year Seven Evaluation Report

Submitted to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
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INTRODUCTION
Following submission of its Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report, the University of Alaska Anchorage hosted a nine-member NWCCU evaluation committee over the period of October 8-10, 2018. The resulting evaluation committee report included four commendations and two recommendations, accepted by the Commission in January 2019. In its January 2019 letter reaffirming UAA’s regional accreditation, the Commission asked UAA to address the two recommendations “as an addendum to the Spring 2020 Mission and Core Themes Report.”

In January 2020 the Commission implemented a set of revised Standards and Eligibility Requirements, as well as a revised approach to its reporting cycle. NWCCU no longer requires a Year-One Mission and Core Themes Report. Accordingly, and per consultation with its NWCCU staff liaison Dr. Mac Powell, UAA respectfully submits this report as a stand-alone Ad Hoc Report to address the two recommendations.

Mission

The mission of the University of Alaska Anchorage is to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement, and creative expression. Located in Anchorage and on community campuses in Southcentral Alaska, UAA is committed to serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities, and its diverse peoples. The University of Alaska Anchorage is an open access university with academic programs leading to occupational endorsements; undergraduate and graduate certificates; and associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees in a rich, diverse, and inclusive environment.

Current Environment

In 2019, Alaska’s newly elected governor proposed deep cuts to the state budget, including a cut of $134 million to the UA System for FY2020. After seven months of debate among legislators and the public, the governor and the UA Board of Regents agreed to $70 million in cuts staged over three years to be apportioned among the three universities. The months of debate had both positive and negative impacts. The outpouring of support for higher education from Alaskans was heartening and ultimately instrumental in reducing the cuts. Unfortunately, the uncertainty about the future of the institution and its programs has had a marked impact on enrollment, according to students. This uncertainty was cited as a major reason for their decision not to return to UAA in fall 2019.

While the budget cuts and falling enrollment present serious challenges, UAA remains focused on serving its students and preparing an educated workforce for the state of Alaska. UAA continues to work on multiple student success initiatives while academic programs and administrative functions undertake an Expedited Review Process to best serve students within the new budget realities.

Note on the Data

The NWCCU site visit was originally scheduled for fall 2017. Accordingly, this report uses data trends that begin with 2017.
UAA RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 1

Recommendation #1: Expand efforts around institutional planning of graduate programs to demonstrate their academic quality and role in mission fulfillment. (Standard 2.C.12)

The UAA response to Recommendation 1 is informed by the following key indicators:

Key Indicators for Graduate Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master’s Programs</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollments</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees Awarded</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits per Degree</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semesters per Degree</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years per Degree</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Doctoral Programs               |      |      |      |
| Enrollments                     | 37   | 30   | 41   |
| Degrees Awarded                 | 7    | 2    | 6    |

Graduate Level Course Pass Rates

|            | 600-699 | 88% | 89% | 90% |

Enrollment: After four successive years of declining enrollment, UAA master’s programs saw enrollments increase in 2019, up 4.6 percent from 2018. While credits per degree declined from 2017 to 2019 for master’s programs, semesters and years to degree increased. This trend suggests students are more efficient with course work but are taking fewer credits per semester.

Pass Rates: Pass rates for graduate level courses have increased, contributing to the efficiency in degree attainment.

Accreditation: UAA has been accredited for doctoral programs since February 2014. UAA offers the Ph.D. in Clinical-Community Psychology and the Doctor of Nursing Practice.

Overview

Graduate programming plays an important role in UAA’s mission to meet the needs of the state, its communities, and its diverse peoples. The UAA self-study revealed a need to strengthen graduate programming and administration, and UAA initiated steps to address those findings. The NWCCU evaluation committee’s recommendation to “expand efforts around institutional planning of graduate programs” confirmed for UAA the need to continue to prioritize and enhance these efforts.

Below is a summary of the steps UAA has taken leading up to and since the site visit to address graduate programming. More detailed descriptions follow.
1. **New Administrative Structure**
   In response to declining graduate enrollments, the Interim Provost consulted with governance groups over the summer and early fall of 2018 and decided to separate the role of Dean of Graduate Studies from the Office of Research. He created a new administrative structure that separates the Graduate School from the Office of Research. The NWCCU site visit occurred while these decisions were in play, and the committee’s recommendation around institutional planning of graduate programs reinforced UAA’s direction.

2. **National Search for Dean of Graduate Studies**
   In fall 2019 the chancellor announced the search for a Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Interim Provost established and charged the search committee. A national search is underway to hire the dean for a fall 2020 start. The Dean of Graduate Studies will provide strategic leadership and administrative direction to develop and maintain a strong culture of graduate education at UAA; to work with industry groups and college-based industry advisory councils to ensure UAA meets their needs and standards; and to develop enrollment plans to strategically grow graduate education to meet regional and state needs. The new dean will be charged to more explicitly articulate and demonstrate for stakeholders the quality of UAA’s graduate programming and its role in mission fulfillment. (See Appendix A.)

3. **Council of Graduate Schools Consultation on Strategic Development**
   To ensure alignment with national best practices, UAA engaged the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) to assist with the strategic development of graduate programs. In summer 2018 CGS worked with a small group of graduate faculty members and the Interim Provost on an initial evaluation of graduate programming at UAA. Afterwards, CGS conducted a consultation site visit. Three CGS consultants visited UAA on March 4-6, 2019 to review four major areas of graduate programming: 1) organization and administrative structure; 2) graduate enrollment management; 3) graduate student funding; and 4) implementation of the graduate faculty policy. During the three-day site visit, the consultants met with the chancellor and senior leadership in Academic Affairs, Research, Student Affairs, Business, and Finance. The CGS consultants also met with the academic deans and faculty representing university faculty governance, graduate
governing committees, and departments as well as students from a broad array of graduate programs.

4. **Review of Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) Recommendations**

In fall 2019, the Graduate Council, a group that is advisory to the UAA Graduate School, completed a preliminary review of the CGS recommendations. The CGS May 2019 report reinforced UAA’s decision to separate the research and graduate offices and to appoint a full-time graduate dean responsible solely for graduate education and graduate students. To address the other recommendations, in fall 2019 the Graduate Council chair created three working groups: Faculty Governance; Graduate Enrollment and Promotion of the Graduate School; and Graduate Faculty Policy. Each working group is charged to propose ways to operationalize the CGS recommendations. The groups will work over the spring 2020 semester to develop proposals and will present them to the full council in May 2020 for preliminary consideration. Full consideration will take place once the new Dean of Graduate Studies has joined the university.

The CGS review resulted in the immediate implementation of two initiatives.

- **Graduate Program Promotion:** The UAA Graduate Council will plan and host a Grad Exploration Day, aimed at current undergraduate students and recent alumni.
- **Re-establishment of the Graduate Student Association:** A group of graduate student leaders are championing this effort and are meeting over the spring semester to strategize on best practices for a revived and strengthened Graduate Student Association.

5. **Better Assessment of Graduate Student Education**

To respond to the NWCCU evaluation committee and to provide consistent evidence to demonstrate how graduate programs support student success at UAA, graduate student success is being incorporated into a new UAA Student Success dashboard. The dashboard will provide ongoing, consistent data to be used in decision-making and allocating resources. The data can be viewed from multiple perspectives and will be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and other institutionally meaningful categories.

6. **Program Review**

To address continuing fiscal challenges, the Board of Regents charged each university to conduct an expedited review process in AY20, and every program at UAA is undergoing Expedited Program Review. As part of the process, programs address student success metrics, such as average credits earned per degree and course pass rates, as well as student achievement of the program student learning outcomes. Programs also have the opportunity to provide additional documentation of achievement, such as student publications or presentations at conferences. These program review reports will be an additional source of information for the institution and the incoming dean. The Dean of Graduate Studies will continue to build out the student success measures as appropriate and will be responsible for designing and producing regular reports to
support the planning, implementation, and assessment of student success initiatives on the graduate level.

**UAA Response to Recommendation 1: Conclusion**

Following several years of declining enrollment, recent UAA graduate program data show an increase in overall enrollment, with award numbers essentially equal to those in 2017, improved credits per degree, and consistently high course pass rates. Students are taking fewer credits per semester, which aligns with UAA’s high percentage of part-time students.

The NWCCU evaluation committee’s concerns centered on enrollment management, as well as the need to more clearly demonstrate strategic, cross-institutional planning as it relates to graduate programming and its overall contribution to mission fulfillment. UAA has taken the NWCCU recommendation seriously, committing financial resources, as well as the time and expertise of faculty, staff, students, and administrators, to address these concerns. As detailed above, UAA has

- Created a new administrative structure for graduate programming,
- Launched a nationwide search for a new graduate dean,
- Engaged consultants from the Council on Graduate Studies,
- Implemented CGS recommendations,
- Initiated a Student Success Dashboard for graduate students, and
- Undertaken systematic program review.

While the search for a Dean of Graduate Studies is underway, the faculty have taken steps to implement collaborative initiatives to respond to the CGS recommendations and have laid the groundwork to address the recommendations more fully once the new dean joins the UAA Graduate School.

In its mid-cycle report, UAA looks forward to describing the results of hiring a new dean, developing and implementing a strategic plan, and selecting and presenting data collected for graduate students and programs.
UAA RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 2

Recommendation #2: Continue the focus on collaborative student success efforts to raise low graduation and retention rates and support Mission Fulfillment. (Standard 5.B.1)

The UAA response to Recommendation 2 focuses upon key student performance metrics, including graduation and persistence rates.

Graduation Rate

At the time of the site visit, UAA had just posted a six-percentage point increase in the First-Time Full-Time (FTFT) 6-year Baccalaureate graduation rate for the fall 2012 cohort over the fall 2011 cohort (from 25.4% to 31.4%). The upward trend has been sustained since then, with the fall 2013 cohort rate improving an additional percentage point to 32%. As reported in UAA’s Performance ’19, the data suggest this trend will continue, as “a higher percentage of the fall 2014 and 2015 cohorts graduated in 4 and 5 years than the 2013 cohort, suggesting that UAA should continue to see improved 6-year graduation rates and achieve its UAA 2020 goal of a 35% 6-year graduation rate by 2025.” (See Appendix B.)

It is encouraging to note that Alaska Native students and students who enrolled in developmental math and/or writing have seen substantial increases in their 6-year graduation rate. Additionally, UAA was recently listed as #6 in the Top 200 Colleges for Indigenous Students put out by the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) in Winds of Change 2018-2019 Special College Issue.
Retention Rate

At the time of the NWCCU site visit, UAA’s retention rate for FTFT baccalaureate degree seekers from fall 2015 to fall 2016 was 70%, reflecting a relatively stable rate over the past seven years. UAA’s retention rate for FTFT baccalaureate degree seekers from fall 2018 to fall 2019 was 66.4%, just under the 66.9% rate reported the previous year.

UAA had expected to see the retention rate improve as a result of implementation of expanded first-year advising and other student success initiatives. However, the uncertainty created by the historic budget crisis in the summer of 2019 resulted in a 10% decline in enrollment in fall 2019. Opening data show baccalaureate-degree seekers declined only 6.8% from fall 2018 to fall 2019, suggesting that student success initiatives did have a positive impact. Regardless, these student success initiatives contributed to improvements in important indicators, including a 4.2% increase in the average course completion rate, an 8% increase from fall 2015 to fall 2019 in first-term students enrolling in math, and a 32% increase in first-term students enrolling in writing. The improvement in course completion and enrollment in math and writing courses in the first-term indicate UAA should see improved retention in the coming terms.

Improvement in the retention rate for Alaska Native and American Indian students is heartening. The decline in rates for students enrolled in developmental math and/or writing course may reflect changes in the cut scores that placed more students into college-level courses. Because nationwide data shows that students who complete their Gen Ed writing and math courses within the first 30 credits show greater retention, persistence, and completion, students formerly identified as developmental were placed into college-level courses with a broader suite of supports like supplemental instruction, peer tutoring, and extended-contact courses. This warrants further study.

The following outlines UAA’s most recent efforts to raise graduation and retention rates.
Vice Provost for Student Success

A new leadership position, Vice Provost for Student Success (VPSS), was created as part of UAA 2020, the short-term strategic plan for which the number one core value is student success. Dr. Claudia Lampman, professor and former director of Psychology at UAA, was hired on November 1, 2017, to serve as UAA’s first Vice Provost for Student Success. The VPSS’s primary responsibility is to work with stakeholders across the institution to improve retention, academic success, and graduation rates. To accomplish this, UAA leadership determined that the position must be at a high level, report directly to the provost, have access to the Chancellor’s Cabinet, and have the resources necessary to implement change. Because many of UAA’s student success initiatives involve areas where faculty have primary responsibility, this person also needs to garner the respect, support and partnership of the faculty. As this report documents, these efforts have paid off, and UAA’s approach to this position was recently featured at the Education Advisory Board (EAB) annual meeting EAB CONNECTED 19 this past fall.

An Intentional and Phased Approach

Acknowledging and building on past achievements and in partnership with a multitude of faculty, staff, students and administrators, Vice Provost Lampman has overseen two years of intensive, broad-based efforts to improve retention and graduation rates. Her tenure in this role began with collecting data about what it was like to be an incoming student at UAA and mapping the student experience from the moment of application through the first year. This included analyzing how students performed in key courses and examining placement, academic preparation, and academic advising. Vice Provost Lampman held a number of open forums, using student success data disaggregated by program, race, and ethnicity to help UAA’s campuses begin to understand the barriers to student success, including equity gaps. The next phase pivots toward closing equity gaps, improving belongingness on campus, documenting barriers to student success beyond the first year, and developing a stronger student profile to ensure any initiatives are tailored to UAA’s actual students. In addition to building out the first-year experience and using peer mentoring for all incoming freshmen, current and projected efforts include peer learning assistants in high-enrolled high-DFW courses and peer advising. These student success efforts at UAA are informed by data and reinforced by ongoing communication in a variety of venues across a broad range of stakeholders.

The following section outlines key actions taken and projected in response to the data gathered, as well as in response to national best practices and concerns expressed by the NWCCU evaluation committee.

KEY STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES ACADEMIC YEAR 2019

The key student success initiatives for AY19 indirectly and directly responded to the NWCCU committee’s concerns regarding inconsistency of advising (Year Seven Evaluation Report, pg. 18) and confusion over advising roles (Year Seven Evaluation Report, pg. 32). UAA created a uniform and consistent advising experience for all incoming UAA students. This included putting into place an overarching structure for advising systems, using best practices combined with local knowledge, and integrating the ongoing training and professional development of advisors. The following section outlines the main AY19 initiatives, the issues they address, and
the outcomes they are expected to yield. The *UAA Student Success Year End Report (FY19)*, which covers these in more detail, is included as an appendix to this report. (See Appendix C.)

**AY19 Initiative 1:**
**Developed, Staffed, & Implemented the Office of First Year Student Advising & Success**

***Issue:*** UAA’s open-access mission means that students come to us at different points in their academic career and with a variety of educational and personal needs, yet new students were provided no single entry-point nor a consistent onboarding process that included academic advising as well as holistic, wrap-around supports.

***Initiative:*** The Office of First Year Student Advising and Success, developed in spring-fall 2018, welcomes, connects, and prepares first time, degree-seeking students for their entry into UAA and subsequent success. First Year Student Advising and Success reports directly to the Vice Provost for Student Success.

***Accomplishments to Date:***
- Hired a highly qualified and experienced director in April 2018.
- Hired and trained eight (8) First Year Advisors passionate about student success, and each brings at least one specialization that addresses specific populations of UAA’s student profile: military and veteran experience; Alaska Native student success experience; homelessness and hunger experience; outdoor recreation experience; writing and cross-cultural experience; health and admissions experience; community college and diversity experience.
- Used external consultants from Ruffalo Noel Levitz and coordinated with Student Affairs to integrate event-based advising and registration with summer orientation.
- Coordinated with the Department of Writing faculty to improve placement into General Education writing courses by using multiple measures and course matching. First Year Student Advising and Success advisors proctor the placement process, and faculty in the Department of Writing evaluate the samples. Approximately 300 students have completed writing samples, and approximately 75% of those students were placed into a higher course or a co-requisite course. As national research shows that relying on single measures of placement for writing and math especially disadvantage students from underserved groups, UAA is placing the highest priority on improving the placement process through the use of: (1) multiple measures (e.g., high school GPA, writing samples) and (2) a course-matching process that includes student self-assessment of writing and math based on last courses taken, self-efficacy in high school, and information about UAA courses. UAA’s AY20 math-placement project for the NWCCU Retention, Persistence, and Student Success Academy builds on UAA’s success using this approach for written communication placement.

***Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes):***
- Improved retention rate and, in the long run, graduation rates.
- Better academic performance in subsequent classes.
AY19 Initiative 2:
Designed and Implemented Academic Pathways (i.e., meta-majors)

Issue: UAA needs a better academic onboarding process for new students. Fifty percent (50%) of UAA students enter underprepared in writing and/or math (pre-GER level). Additionally, many were self-advising, resulting in 40% of students switching majors by the end of their first year, resulting in their graduating with more credits than they need and at greater cost.

Initiative: UAA used the best practice of meta-majors for first-time baccalaureate degree-seeking students, employing placement-level data to develop first-year course maps. In 2017-18, student success open forums gathered input regarding the idea of implementing a meta-major approach to first-year academic onboarding and advising. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, yet the term meta-majors was not well-liked. The term Academic Pathways was adopted instead. The Vice Provost for Student Success then charged an Academic Pathways (AP) Steering Committee to develop the infrastructure for the AP initiative at UAA. The committee’s AY19 goals were (1) to develop first-year course maps – an advising road map to guide students through a successful first year – and (2) to expose students to multiple fields of study within their selected AP. The committee included representatives from every college and two community campuses, as well as the Director of First Year Student Advising and Success and the General Education Director. Professor Carrie King, former chair of the Faculty Senate Undergraduate Academic Board, chaired the committee.

The process was broad, inclusive, and used data to inform decisions along the way. It began by introducing the committee and the university community to the general concepts of Academic Pathways and Gateway Courses, and consensus developed concerning the number and types of academic pathways to be developed. The committee then used 5 years of historical pass-rate data to generate specific course recommendations for students depending upon their placement in writing and math. The course maps identify the classes students should take within the first 30 credits, including appropriate general education courses, as well as those that expose them to the broadest possible range of majors within that pathway. UAA data show that students who start-out full time, even if they switch to part-time later, are more likely to complete their degrees this way. For this reason, the Academic Pathways start with the assumption that a student is full time (12 credits) in the first semester.

Accomplishments to Date:
- Created nine pathways: 1) Business; 2) Engineering; 3) Industry and Technical Education; 4) Health Sciences and Professions; 5) Humanities; 6) Math and Natural Sciences; 7) Service Professions; 8) Social Sciences; and 9) Visual and Performing Arts.
- Implemented the Pathways during late-spring and early-summer 2019 at Howl Days (new student orientation).
- Identified existing courses to introduce students to a range of possible majors in each AP, such as BA A151: Business Foundations and ENGR: A151 Introduction to Engineering. Additionally, colleges without such courses were encouraged to develop them. A new College of Health course HLTH A151: Breaking Trail on Your Health and Social Services Career was created for the Health Sciences and Professions and Service Professions pathways and first offered in fall 2019.
Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes):

- Decrease in students dropping (D) and withdrawing (W) from courses due to more accurate placement, better advising, and data-driven course recommendations. The percent of first-time freshman dropping all classes has gone down from 2.5% in fall 2016 to a four-year low of 1.6% in fall 2019.
- Increase in students taking math, writing, and communications (Tier 1 GERs) in the first year. The number of all first-time freshman who complete GER MATH, WRTG, and COMM courses in the first year has increased from 52% in fall 2015 to a five-year high of 57% in fall 2019.
- Increase in (or even comparable) student pass-rates because FYA advising places students into courses better matched to their placement level. Taking the right classes early allows students to advance toward their degrees as opposed to the uncoordinated schedules that often result through self-advising.
- Decrease in students switching majors, which often increases total credits per degree.

The effectiveness of these measures will be assessed again at the end of spring 2020.

AY19 Initiative 3:
Partnered with Education Advisory Board (EAB) on Best Practices and Tools

Issue: UAA needs to improve persistence and graduation rates.

Initiative: UAA joined EAB’s Student Success Collaborative in fall 2017. The Collaborative connects UAA with a national network of schools, all working to improve student persistence and graduation, and provides access to peer institutions, live webinars, major research on student success, and national student success summits. The Vice Provost for Student Success, hired in fall 2017, was charged with managing the partnership with EAB, and UAA adopted the EAB Navigate advising platform and the companion student mobile app, branding them as Seawolf Tracks. Seawolf Tracks combines technology, research, and predictive analytics to improve how academic advisors, faculty, and staff interact with and guide students to achieve their educational goals.

The Seawolf Tracks Academic Advising Platform provides a comprehensive view of a student’s degree progress based on 10 years of historical UAA data. Advisors can see where and when a student might need help or intervention to stay on track or move to a different major or degree. Advisors can create campaigns targeted at specific groups of students, streamline appointment scheduling for the advisor and student, identify at-risk students more easily, send students automated reminders of appointments, and record and store session notes that can be accessed by other staff. Seawolf Tracks uses the power of UAA’s data to help students find and complete their best academic path. Faculty can submit progress reports and early alerts to students through Seawolf Tracks. UAA conducted a pilot in spring 2018 and implemented the process fully in fall 2019.

The Seawolf Tracks mobile application streamlines the UAA student experience through content that highlights university traditions, upcoming registration deadlines, and personalized to-do lists
and student schedules. Students can connect with university resources through their network and access a comprehensive directory of student services on their phones. They can use the app to get reminders about important deadlines; get help locating their classrooms and key offices on campus; sync their class schedule with their phone calendar; receive life and school tips for success in college; and schedule appointments with advisors and tutors.

An initial assessment has been conducted, and there are planned improvements for the next implementation. For example, faculty suggested fewer messages with more time for faculty to send them. Academic advisors also receive a list of their advisees’ progress reports so that they can follow-up with a student who might be at risk of not passing a course in time to help them get back on track. Student support services can use Seawolf Tracks for coordinated care. The UAA the Dean of Students Office, Residence Life, Student Health and Counseling, and the Care Team have access to the students’ reports. In the future, faculty will be able to send behavioral as well as academic concerns to these teams using Seawolf Tracks, rather than through a separate website.

Accomplishments to Date:
- Invited to present a Case Study at the EAB annual conference CONNECTED 19 in fall 2019. UAA was selected from among EAB’s 900+ members to highlight as an institution that has transformed its student success efforts.
- Trained 100% of professional academic advisors to use Seawolf Tracks.
- Offered free downloads to all students, and 72% of first-year students have downloaded the Seawolf Tracks mobile app (encouraged at orientation). Plans to incorporate an exercise using the app are in place for the spring and summer 2020 orientations.
- Launched progress reports tied to Seawolf Tracks, with 325+ faculty participating.

Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes):
- Improved retention, persistence, and ultimately graduation due to better student advising and greater ongoing contact with students.
- Created a consistent student experience across majors, including for students who do switch majors.
- Identified institutional barriers for students close to completion.

AY19 Initiative 4:
Established the Academic Advising Steering Committee

Issue: UAA’s advising was decentralized across multiple colleges and Student Affairs, creating a lack of a consistent, uniform student experience.

Initiative: UAA established the Academic Advising Steering Committee in spring 2019 to establish policy and align advising across the institution. Comprised of representatives from each college advising unit and the Office of First Year Advising and Success, membership includes individuals providing direct student advising and those in academic leadership roles. Two community campus advising coordinators are also members. The committee is chaired by
Valerie Robideaux, the Director of First Year Student Advising and Success and Kendra Sticka, the Director of Student Success in the College of Health.

The committee is charged to develop policy for consistency in hiring, training, and professional development of academic advisors; strategy for standardization, as appropriate, for academic advisor position descriptions, evaluation mechanisms, and career-laddering opportunities; clarity in expectations for advisor use of advising tools, technology, mechanisms for accountability in fulfilling expectations; common advising outcomes, metrics, benchmarks, and mechanisms for reporting on each; a streamlined and strategic communication plan; a common advising campaign calendar for all primary academic advisors; and a plan for reviewing best practices at peer institutions. (See Appendix D.)

Accomplishments to Date:

- Developed UAA Academic Advising Roles & Responsibilities, which identifies three different advising roles: First Year Academic Advisors, College Academic Advisors, and Faculty Mentors. (See Appendix E.)
- Identified a primary advisor for each student and provided process recommendations for advisor assignments in Banner to ensure that students, faculty, and staff can easily identify a student's advisor. (See Appendix F.)
- Developed permission levels for Seawolf Tracks access for various types of staff so the tool can be maximized in its use while still maintaining appropriate access to student information.
- Partnered with the Registrar's office on the timing and content of messages regarding Academic Standing to help students get the information they need to address Academic Standing issues. A key goal was to connect students with their advisor for assistance.
- Developed common advising campaigns using Seawolf Tracks, including re-enrollment and registration campaigns, with movement toward a comprehensive standardized campaign calendar. The finalized campaigns are: registration for next term, graduation check, end-of-term re-enrollment, and end-of-term academic standing communication.
- Provided training to advisors on advanced use of and best practices in employing Seawolf Tracks.
- Moved all academic advisors to Academic Affairs.

Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes):

- Created a consistent, uniform student experience that makes it easier for students to navigate the range of academic processes.
- Established a central communication hub so all advisors receive timely and consistent information in order to do their job effectively. UAA has already benefitted by having a core group formally charged with disseminating information to all advisors. For example, as UAA prepares for possible program discontinuations, the group will ensure that consistent messaging goes out to all advisors.

KEY STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES ACADEMIC YEAR 2020

In AY20 student success initiatives continue to advance the above with a pivot toward closing equity gaps, increasing belongingness on campus, and documenting barriers to student success beyond the first year. Specific initiatives include developing a comprehensive first-year
experience program, employing Peer Learning Assistants in high-enrolled high-DFW courses, and participating in the NWCCU Retention, Persistence, and Student Success Academy.

**AY20 Initiative 1: Building-Out the First Year Experience**

*Issue:* UAA has experienced a lack of a cohesive first-year experience program that systematically addresses the academic, social, and personal-development support needs of UAA’s degree-seeking students. This contributes to high major-switching rates after the first year.

*Initiative:* UAA is developing a First Year Experience for incoming students, a documented High Impact Practice. In fall 2019, under the direction of the Vice Provost for Student Success, the First Year Student Advising and Success director led a cross-departmental First Year Experience Committee (FYEC) comprised of five faculty and three staff members. The committee was charged to provide strategic direction, program recommendations, and implementation strategies that support first-year student success through consistent and comprehensive academic and engagement programs. (See Appendix G.)

**Accomplishments to Date:**
- Identified three overarching goals for UAA’s First Year Experience program using EAB’s Barriers to Student Success and Advancing Student Success infographics and research: increase academic confidence, increase sense of belongingness, and increase opportunities for career exploration.
- Researched national best practices related to these areas and identified two major initiatives to explore for implementation at UAA: a required common first year experience course and learning communities.
- Presented research and recommendations at faculty/staff forums. Compiled stakeholder feedback and refined recommendations.
- Currently compiling a report to Academic Affairs with the FYEC’s recommended First Year Experience plan and proposed implementation timeline for a fall 2021 launch.

**Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes):**
- Increased academic confidence, belongingness, and career exploration opportunities for first-year degree-seeking students.
- Improved first-year pass rates, fall-to-fall persistence, and decreased major switching rates for students in returning years.

**AY20 Initiative 2: Implementing a Peer Learning Assistant (PLA) Program**

*Issue:* UAA experiences high-enrollment courses with high DFW rates.

*Initiative:* UAA is initiating a Peer Learning Assistant program for high DFW courses. In May 2019 the Vice Provost for Student Success held a session for faculty who teach high-DFW/high-enrollment classes in order to identify the supports that these faculty feel students need to be
more successful in these courses. The courses tend to cluster in large gateway courses in arts and sciences: Biology, Chemistry, Math, Physics, and Psychology. A consensus emerged that embedding peers to assist with active learning and problem-solving during class sessions and to hold supplemental instruction, problem-solving, and tutoring sessions before and after class would assist struggling students. Faculty felt that peers would be more approachable than teaching assistants because they would be seen as a resource for the students rather than faculty. A High Impact Practice, peer assistance is also one of the proven ways to close equity gaps. (See Appendix H.)

Accomplishments to Date:
- Piloted PLAs in five departments in fall 2019, and 12 PLAs worked with 12 different courses.
- Created an assessment committee of faculty teaching the courses to evaluate the PLA program.
- Increased the PLA program to 18 PLAs in 24 class sections in spring 2020.
- Implemented a system for participating faculty to assess the PLA program, track students who attend supplemental sessions, examine the course pass rates, and compare student outcomes in sections with PLAs to past sections without them.

Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes)
- Increased course pass rates for sections that have an assigned PLA.

AY20 Initiative 3:
Implementing a Peer Mentoring Program for First Year Students

Issue: UAA’s open-access mission to address the educational needs of Alaska’s diverse peoples is challenging, particularly for Alaska Native students, other Historically Underrepresented Groups, and First Generation & Pell Eligible Students. In addition to PLA, peer mentoring is a proven way to improve retention, to increase the sense of belongingness, and to help reduce equity gaps. The Chancellor’s Task Force on Alaska Native Student Success identified peer-to-peer assistance as a best practice, and several programs on campus that have closed equity gaps (Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program, Seawolf Success in the Multicultural Center, and Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing) attribute their success in large part to peer mentoring. As a result, UAA has entered into a 3-year agreement with the Mentor Collective to help us match incoming, degree-seeking freshman with mentors to begin in fall 2020.

Initiative: UAA has joined with mentorcollective.org, a nonprofit that matches mentors and mentees. All incoming degree-seeking freshman will be offered the chance to be matched with a mentor (a sophomore or higher) based on the results of a survey that both complete. They will then enter into a mentorship using the Mentor Collective’s online system.

Accomplishments:
- Signed a 3-year contract with mentorcollective.org.
- Held the kickoff meeting in January 2020.
Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes)

- Increased persistence from first fall to first spring and then to second fall for participating first-time freshman.
- Improved belongingness for students who participate (both mentees and mentors).

AY20 Initiative 4:
Refining the UAA Student Profile

Issue: UAA needs to understand its students and the needs of the whole person more fully. Understanding our students’ needs will allow us to serve all students better, to close equity gaps, and to develop initiatives more suited to our populations and mission.

Initiative: UAA is developing a refined student profile to better serve our students. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2016 data, which is based on self-reported information, suggest that our students work more and take care of dependents more than their peers. UAA is validating this by implementing a national instrument. The Revealing Institutional Strengths and Challenges (RISC) Survey, developed by Percontor.org, provides an additional 10 questions customized for UAA students to build a stronger student profile and to benchmark UAA against our peers. The RISC survey studies day-to-day barriers to student success. It will also help UAA gain an accurate snapshot of who UAA students are in terms of their day-to-day lives: How much and where do they work? Are they caring for family members? The goal is to gather data on personal life experiences and identify barriers to student success from a representative sample of students in the spring 2020 semester. Using this instrument will also allow UAA to compare results to similar institutions.

Accomplishments to Date:

- Administer the RISC Survey through a random sample of UAA courses in the spring 2020 semester with the aim of surveying approximately 500 undergraduate students. The target is to collect data in February and March 2020.

Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes):

- Create a more accurate picture of students’ commitments outside of school (e.g., work, caring for dependents).
- Identify additional barriers to student success.

AY20 Initiative 5:
Incorporating the NWCCU Retention, Persistence, and Student Success Academy

Issue: UAA has a high number of degree-seeking students who are underprepared for college-level coursework. Approximately 20% of first-time students seeking a Bachelor’s degree from UAA place into (0-level/pre-GER) coursework in Math and/or Writing. For first-time students seeking an Associate’s degree, the number is closer to 27%. Many students, however, also place into credit-bearing college-level courses (100-level) but do not meet General Education Requirements (GERs) in Math and Writing. Approximately 60% of new degree-seeking students do not place into GER-level Math, and about 40% do not place into GER-level Writing. We
know that retention, persistence, and graduation rates are significantly lower for students who begin their studies in developmental or pre-GER coursework.

Initiative: UAA was among a select group of institutions to participate in NWCCU’s inaugural Retention, Persistence, and Student Success Academy. UAA’s project is to employ best practices to achieve 90% of incoming students taking their general education math and writing within their first 30 credits. Research shows that the sooner students achieve these milestones, the more likely they are to be retained, to persist, and to complete. UAA will be using a course-matching survey with all first-time freshman to improve placement. The NWCCU core team – comprised of two faculty from the Department of Quantitative Studies, a faculty member from the Department of Writing, the Dean of the Community and Technical College, and the Vice Provost for Student Success (Chair) – has held biweekly meetings since November 2019.

Accomplishments to Date:
- Piloted course-matching in writing, through the use of multiple measures.
- Funded a team of five faculty and administrators to attend the in-person meeting of the NWCCU Retention, Persistence, and Student Success Academy in November 2019.
- Implement a Course Matching Survey in spring 2020 for all first-time freshman that, in addition to placement exams in Writing (Accuplacer) and Math (ALEKS), gathers data on multiple measures like high school GPA, last courses taken, and student confidence. Following the survey, students might be asked to submit a writing sample or have a meeting with a faculty member. The survey also asks students which course they believe is the best for them after exposing them to samples of writing and course descriptions. UAA piloted this approach in Writing and is now adding Math to the survey.
- Create closer collaboration with our K-12 partners to bring together math and writing coordinators and faculty (K12 and UAA) and counselors/academic advisors to discuss what we can all do to help prepare students for a strong start in college.

Outcomes (or Expected Outcomes):
- Develop more accurate placement with fewer students into pre-GER / 0-level math and writing courses and have them successfully complete the classes, saving students time and money.
- Increase the number of students taking math and writing in the first year and completing foundational courses in these areas.
- Increase coordination with our K-12 partners.

Closing Equity Gaps. In addition to the above highlighted initiatives, UAA is committed to closing equity gaps by advancing the goals of its Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. In spring 2019 Chancellor Sandeen assembled the Task Force on Alaska Native Student Success, which put forward a set of recommendations now under consideration. A new director for the office of Native Student Services has been hired, and the office has been expanded to include an interim assistant director. A search for a Chief Diversity Officer was launched in January 2020, and the chancellor’s Diversity Action Council created a student success subcommittee. A new Diversity and Inclusion General Education Requirement has been submitted to the curriculum review process for implementation in fall 2020 to complement our fall 2018 Alaska Native Themed General Education initiative. Additionally, the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program
(ANSEP) Acceleration Academy continues to bring Alaska Native students from 8th grade to a BS degree in six years, saving families tens of thousands in college costs, preparing Alaska Native students for STEM professions, and addressing an important equity gap.

*Increasing Affordability.* UAA is also tackling issues of affordability. Affordability initiatives include expanding Middle College and other dual enrollment opportunities across UAA campuses, including the recognition of prior learning. To improve the consistency of transfer and reduce cost and time to degree, UAA was the first university in Alaska to join the Interstate Passport. As the Alaska representative for the Interstate Passport, UAA’s Director of General Education is working with faculty across Alaska post-secondary institutions. In addition, faculty notably have taken the lead on a grassroots effort for textbook affordability at UAA with Open Educational Resource (OER) initiatives. These efforts and more demonstrate that student success for all students is at the heart UAA’s work. (See Appendix L.)

*Addressing Accreditation.* Finally, UAA has moved fully into its next accreditation cycle and is developing its student achievement (student success) metrics, including a set of leading indicators. A draft of these metrics is included as an appendix to this report. In addition to retention, persistence, and graduation rates and their disaggregation, UAA has identified three leading indicators:

- Students complete Tier 1 GERs within their first 30 credits (WRTG, MATH, COMM);
- Course pass rates improve in first-year and Gateway Courses; and
- Credits earned to credits attempted at the time of graduation improve.

By improving results on the leading indicators, UAA should see improved retention, persistence, and graduation rates. Using disaggregated data, UAA also can be more strategic about interventions, better serve all UAA students, and close equity gaps. (See Appendix M.)

**UAA Response to Recommendation 2: Conclusion**

Student success is at the core of UAA’s open-access mission. The short-term bridging strategic plan *UAA 2020* places student success squarely at the center of UAA’s work and sets ambitious targets for retention, persistence, and graduation. The NWCCU evaluation committee noted the many efforts just underway, and this report details the continuation of those efforts, as well as new student success efforts. These include the Office of First Year Student Advising and Success; Academic Pathways; Seawolf Tracks; a new advising structure led by the Academic Student Advising Steering Committee; First Year Experience programming; Peer Learning Assistants; peer mentoring; and participation in the NWCCU Retention, Persistence, and Student Success Academy.

Since the NWCCU site visit, FTFT baccalaureate-seeking graduation rates have continued to rise, including for Alaska Native students and for students placing into developmental coursework. Other important indicators of future success are also showing improvement, such as the increase in the percentage of first-term students taking foundational general education courses and the decrease in the percentage of first-term students dropping all courses. While the overall retention rate has declined within the climate of budget uncertainty, retention of Alaska Native students has increased, suggesting that efforts to close equity gaps are having an impact.
on this important student cohort. UAA is encouraged by these trends and expects to see similar impacts on other student cohorts.

By using disaggregated data, proven best-practices, collaboration across the institution, and a phased approach, UAA is moving the needle on graduation rates and on key indicators that point to improvement in overall retention moving forward.

CONCLUSION

On January 31, 2019, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities notified the University of Alaska Anchorage of the action taken at its January 9-11, 2019, meeting. At the meeting, the NWCCU reaffirmed UAA’s regional accreditation. Within that decision, the Commission noted two areas in which UAA is substantially in compliance, but in need of improvement: (1) institutional planning regarding graduate programs and (2) increasing student success to address the institutional mission.

Since the NWCCU site visit, UAA has committed time, effort, and resources to address the two recommendations. Strategic personnel and infrastructure allocations have been made to ensure the continuity, as well as adaptability, of these efforts. Adaptability will remain important, as the State of Alaska and the university continue to face a challenging budget environment. All academic and service programs are undergoing program review to meet required budget reductions. Decisions to reduce or discontinue programs will be painful, and the institution recognizes that it must keep the impact on students at the center of all these decisions.

While UAA cannot control its external environment, this report demonstrates that UAA has addressed the two NWCCU recommendations and has taken steps to prioritize both graduate planning and student success. Particularly as they relate to student success, data already show that these efforts are making a difference and demonstrate improvement in FTFT graduation rates, including for Alaska Native students and students taking developmental coursework. While overall retention has decreased, it has increased for Alaska Native students, suggesting that targeted efforts to close equity gaps are working. Moreover, key indicators, such as the percent of all first-time freshman taking math, writing, and communication general education courses in the first year, are up. The expectation is that UAA will continue to show progress in key areas over which it has some level of control, further reducing barriers, and using data-informed best practices toward the success of the students it serves.

UAA submits that this Ad Hoc Report demonstrates that UAA is (1) expanding efforts around institutional planning of graduate programs to demonstrate their academic quality and role in mission fulfillment and (2) continuing the focus on collaborative student success efforts to raise low graduation and retention rates and to serve the higher education needs of the state, its communities, and its diverse peoples.
Position Description for Dean of Graduate Studies

Reporting to the Provost, the Dean of Graduate Studies provides strategic leadership and administrative direction to develop and maintain a strong culture of graduate education at UAA.

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

- Provide focused leadership for graduate education including: coordinating the graduate school’s component of the strategic plan.
- Work with the Provost, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Research to ensure high quality graduate education and to assist with accreditation related activities that impact graduate education.
- Increase graduate school revenue and enrollment.
- Work with the Vice Provost for Research, academic college deans, and faculty to conceptualize, develop, and implement new graduate programs to meet workforce needs and advance research.
- Collaborate across the university to develop and market graduate programs and promote the recruitment, retention, graduation, and career success of students earning graduate degrees.
- Reach out to industry groups and program advisory boards to understand state needs for graduate education and workforce development and facilitate program development to meet those needs.
- In conjunction with academic college deans, advocate for appropriate budgets for graduate programs across the university.
- Provide focused leadership for graduate education across multiple delivery modalities including blended and online programs.
- Working with academic deans and faculty of graduate programs, provide support for faculty professional development and mentoring.
- Supervise and support the staff of the Graduate School.
- Create a sense of community and graduate student culture within programs and across colleges.
- Actively participate in internal governance by serving as a member of the Provost’s Academic Council.
- Work with Faculty Senate to develop and maintain a shared governance structure that serves the needs of the Graduate School’s students and faculty.
- Support diversity, inclusion, and a culture of respect.
Qualifications:

Required qualifications: the successful candidate will have an earned terminal degree from an accredited institution, three or more years of experience leading and directing graduate programs, and will be eligible for appointment at the rank of professor with tenure.

Preferred qualifications include: an earned doctorate; three or more years of (a) teaching and mentoring graduate students, (b) experience in graduate curriculum and policy development, (c) experience in securing extramural funding for programs and/or graduate student support, (d) experience in enrollment management (nationally and/or internationally) to include recruiting, marketing, program development, and graduate retention efforts, (e) experience in budgeting and resource allocation.
DEFINITION: The percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate degree-seeking students enrolled in a given fall semester who earn their degree within 150% of the time to complete (six years for a four-year baccalaureate degree). The 2018 rate measures the cohorts who completed their degree by August 2019 (entering UAA in fall 2013).

PURPOSE: This nationally normed metric measures how efficiently the first-time, full-time degree-seeking students reach their educational goals. It also demonstrates the university's collective ability to support student completion.

FIRST-TIME FULL-TIME BACCALAUREATE 6-YEAR GRADUATION RATE TRENDS

6-YEAR BACCALAUREATE GRADUATION RATE TRENDS BY COHORTS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

PERFORMANCE: UAA is pleased to see its 6-year baccalaureate graduation rate increase to 32%, a new record.

The increase from 2018 is heartening, and may be seen as a validation of a number of programs implemented over the last several years. These include the use of software programs such as DegreeWorks, introduced in AY09 to help students check progress to completion, and the Stay-on-Track initiative, launched in spring 2012, that promoted students enrolling in 15 credits per semester to finish in four years. Under the new Student Success Initiative, the First-Year Advising, and Seawolf Tracks programs have replaced and expanded the MapWorks program that focused on at-risk first and second year students used between 2010-2017.

A higher percentage of the fall 2014 and 2015 cohorts graduated in 4 and 5 years than the 2013 cohort, suggesting that UAA should continue to see improved 6-year graduation rates and achieve its UAA 2020 goal of a 35% 6-year graduation rate by 2025.

Increases in the graduation rate were seen in the College of Business and Public Policy which had a 50.6% graduation rate, up from 36.9% in 2018. The College of Arts and Sciences graduation rate also increased, from 33.6% to 37.2%. All other colleges had slightly lower graduation rates.

A second year of increased rates was found among subcohorts of special interest such as Alaska Natives and students who had enrolled in developmental education courses their first year. While these rates remain below the total, improvement is encouraging.

Of the 1,235 first-time baccalaureate degree-seeking students entering in fall 2013, 80% entered as full-time students. The rest began as part-time students, and of these 6% graduated within six years, bringing the combined graduation rate for all baccalaureate degree-seeking students in the cohort to 26.8% in 2019, nearly one percentage point higher than 2018.
University of Alaska Anchorage

Student Success

Year End Report (FY 19)

Claudia Lampman, Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Student Success

Valerie Robideaux, M.Div.
Director, First Year Student Advising and Success
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UAA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the University of Alaska Anchorage is to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement, and creative expression.

Located in Anchorage and on community campuses in Southcentral Alaska, UAA is committed to serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities, and its diverse peoples.

The University of Alaska Anchorage is an open access university with academic programs leading to occupational endorsements; undergraduate and graduate certificates; and associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees in a rich, diverse, and inclusive environment.

REPORT SUMMARY and FY20 GOALS

UAA 2020, our three-year strategic plan, identified the core values of student success, excellence, access, and affordability. Our outcomes by 2020 are as follows:

- Increase the first to second year retention rate of all entrants
- Increase persistence rate of all students from second to third year
- Increase the 6-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time baccalaureate degree seekers to 35% by AY25
- Increase the number of graduates in high demand job areas by 2% per year
- Lower the cost per award by removing barriers and improving efficiencies

In FY 19, our major student success initiatives were as follows:

- Established the Office of First Year Student Advising and Success (FYSAS)
- Implemented the Seawolf Tracks (EAB Navigate) platform for academic advising and companion mobile app for students
- Launched the Academic Pathways initiative
- Developed an integrated, event-based approach to orientation, advising and registration
- Began the work of academic advising alignment across UAA

In addition, we worked on the following student success initiatives through committees:

- Establishing a textbook affordability program
- Improving placement into writing and math courses with a multiple measures approach

In order to conduct this work, the following committees were created or continued from FY18:

- Student Success Advisory Council (see Appendix)
- Seawolf Tracks Leadership and Communications Teams
- Academic Pathways Steering Committee (new in FY 19)
- Placement Council (new in FY 19)
- Academic Advising Steering Committee (new in FY 19)

In order to sustain progress in Student Success, our initiatives need to advance and grow. Student Success seeks executive level support and commitment for the following FY20 initiatives:

- First Year Experience Program
  - Develop a cohort approach to enrollment in first year foundation courses
  - Develop required course content for all first year students
  - Create a peer mentorship program

- Academic Advising
  - Complete Academic Pathways advising sheets for associates degrees
  - Make sure all students who need academic advising are connected with an advisor (e.g., dual enrollment students and non-degree seeking students who might eventually want a degree)
  - Establish a college preparation advising program for high school students
  - Expand the use of Seawolf Tracks, including development of a common campaign calendar and incorporation of all student services
• Develop an academic advising career ladder and training program (through the Academic Advising Steering Committee)

➢ Faculty Role in Student Success
• Roll out the progress report function of Seawolf Tracks across UAA in Fall 2019
• Train faculty to use Seawolf Tracks for academic and care alerts
• Establish a sustainable supplemental/peer instruction program
• Continue work with the Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence to support faculty working to improve completion rates in high DFW/high enrollment gateway courses
• Work with academic departments to establish success markers for majors and degree completion analyses for programs
• Work with faculty to improve textbook affordability

➢ Identify and Eliminate Barriers to Student Success
• Conduct a survey of a representative sample of UAA students on barriers to student success
• Conduct a survey of student-facing staff regarding barriers to student success

The report below summarizes major student success initiatives, including plans for FY 20 continuation and improvement.
Background

Launching the Office of First Year Student Advising and Success (FYSAS) was the top student success initiative for FY19. The Director, Valerie Robideaux, was hired in April 2018 and she hired and trained eight first year advisors (FYAs) in the Summer and Fall of 2018. This centralized advising team is located in the Professional Studies Building (PSB) suite 206, and are fully operational offering academic advising and success support to incoming, degree-seeking students. The Office of First Year Student Advising & Success is administered by the Vice Provost for Student Success within the Office of Academic Affairs.

Student Services

The FYSAS team logged 3,540 student interactions between August 1st 2018 and June 30th 2019. Here is the breakdown by month.

The eight advisors in FYSAS serve students in all majors and academic pathways apart from those in the College of Engineering and the Community and Technical College (CTC). Engineering has a dedicated first year advisor and the CTC student success coaches (SSCs) serve as FYAs for all majors in their respective colleges. These advisors have completed all FYA trainings described below. In total, the First Year Advising team includes 13 advisors dedicated to serving the needs of UAA’s new degree-seeking student body.

Training Program

The First Year Advisors, including the Engineering first year advisor and the CTC student success coaches, have been through a comprehensive training program to support first year students in their social, emotional, and academic needs. The 40 training events included the following:

Vision and Values
FYSAS Program Orientation
Campus Tour
New Student Orientation
Clifton Strengths Finders

Electronic Tools
Banner-Student
EAB: Seawolf Tracks
Degree Works
UAOnline

Student Support Services
Multicultural Center
Native Student Services
Military & Veteran Affairs
Health & Counseling Services
Disability Support Services
Financial Aid
Registrar
TRIO Support Services
National Student Exchange
Residence Life
Care Team
Career Exploration
Career Coach
Study Abroad
AKCIS

Academic Advising & Student Success
Interstate Passport
General Ed & AA
Flipped Advising
Federal Policy Update
Re-enrolling Lost Students
Storytellers for Change
Event-Based First Year Advising & Registration

One of the major FYSAS initiatives for 2018-2019 was to develop event-based summer advising and registration. During the summer of 2018, FYSAS coordinated one-stop, drop-in Advising & Registration Days, enabling over 200 students to meet with an advisor, register for classes, and consult with Enrollment Services and Financial Aid. For Spring and Summer 2019, FYSAS teamed up with New Student Orientation to offer Academic Pathways advising at 16 Howl Days orientation sessions (see Academic Pathways below for more about advising and registration of first year students).

Student Support Outreach

In 2018-2019, the FYSAS team conducted ground-breaking student support outreach for UAA. These included advisor-initiated proactive, intervention communication with all of the following groups:

- First Time Freshman (FTF) who withdrew from courses after the add/drop deadline
- Academically at-risk students identified by Pre/Tier 1 faculty
- FTF who did not enroll in the Spring semester during the enrollment period
- FTF in Residence Life with below a 2.0 GPA
- FTF with Accounts Receivable Holds in the fall and spring semesters

First Year Student Advising for Alaska Native Student Success

In October 2018, FYSAS hired a First Year Advisor for Alaska Native Student Success. This advisor and another FYA spend eight hours a week in Native Student Services, and they have hosted events at the Camai-Center in the Residence Halls. Incoming Alaska Native students outside of the College of Engineering and the Community and Technical College are assigned to this FYA for academic advising.

Infographics

The FYSAS Office curated the following infographics to demonstrate processes and workflows. These documents are available in the Appendix to this report.

- FYSAS Framework
- FYSAS New Student Engagement and Retention Plan
- FYSAS College Advisement Transition Plan

FY20 Plan for First Year Student Advising and Success

The next page summarizes the FYSAS plan for FY20 and beyond along with the primary and secondary drivers of student success and our vision, values, and foci.
Our Values
:: Contagiously Collaborative
:: Next-Level Helpers
:: Compassionate Responders
:: Eager Educators
:: Constant Cheerleaders
:: Proactive Communicators

Our Focus
Mission: For every first year student to feel welcome, prepared, and engaged on campus.
Vision: To empower students to thrive (problem solving), start college on the right path (information literacy), and persist in their academic goals.

Our Target
UAA students with 0-30 hrs.
Degree Seeking
Pre-GER students
Alaska Native students

To-Date: 7/1/2019
:: 70% FY retention
:: Program Director
:: Diverse team of 8 First Year Advisors
:: 40 FYA training events
:: Centralized office space
:: Incoming student onboarding plan
:: College Advisement Transition plan
:: Academic Pathways for baccalaureate degrees
:: Exploratory/Undeclared student advisement
:: Advising & registration at Howl Days
:: FTF withdrawal reports outreach
:: Pre/Tier 1 faculty referrals outreach
:: FTF spring registration outreach
:: FTF Res life < 2.0 outreach
:: FTF AR holds outreach
:: 3,500+ student interactions

Future Date: 7/1/2020
One Year Critical Success Factors
:: Increase FY degree-seeking retention to 74%
:: Integrated AAS Academic Pathways
:: Establish advising metrics & benchmarks
:: Create culture of advising as education
:: Phase out Exploratory/Undeclared major
:: Establish First Year Experience team
:: Develop at-risk student strategy

Future Date: 7/1/2021
The Picture
:: Increase FY degree-seeking retention to 78%
:: Application and Pathway alignment
:: Full scale mandatory first year advising
:: High caliber success programming
:: A cohesive first year student experience

Current Reality
:: 70% FY retention
:: Program Director
:: Diverse team of 8 First Year Advisors
:: 40 FYA training events
:: Centralized office space
:: Incoming student onboarding plan
:: College Advisement Transition plan
:: Academic Pathways for baccalaureate degrees
:: Exploratory/Undeclared student advisement

One-Year Plan
Secondary Drivers of Student Success
Refine hand-off strategy with admissions
Launch course-matching process
Create First Year Experience cross-divisional team
Work to align Pathways with application/admission
Host outside speaker opportunities
Student Success/Advising Symposium
Audit academic probation students
Campaigns targeting exploratory students
Create first year success advising curriculum plan
Integrate EAB success markers and faculty alerts
Host training for difficult conversations

Two-Year Picture
FY 20 Primary Drivers of Student Success
To meet students “at the gate” and make every admitted student feel welcome, connected, and prepared for their next steps.
To develop a clear and unobstructed onramp to first year enrollment that guides students on the right path regarding their Tier 1 placement, and academic and career goals.
To establish a culture of compassion and hospitable outreach and advocacy for first year students to encourage their overall success.
To develop a comprehensive and educational approach to FY advising and student success that empowers students to thrive (problem solve), stay on the right path (info literacy), and persist in their goals (integrated learning).
To develop a student success tracking system and process for monitoring, outreach, and advising at-risk students.
In Fall 2018, UAA joined EAB’s Student Success Collaborative as one of our major student success initiatives to increase 1st-2nd year retention, 1st-3rd year persistence, and the 6-year graduation rate for first time, full-time, baccalaureate degree-seekers. Adopting both the EAB Navigate advising platform and companion student mobile app provides UAA a strategic approach to student interaction, academic advising, and coordinated care that is helping UAA move the needle on retention and completion. UAA branded the advising platform and app Seawolf Tracks (SWT) and worked with Advancement to develop a SWT logo.

Academic Advisor Adoption of Seawolf Tracks

Over the course of 2018-2019, UAA Student Success has been hosting training opportunities for professional and faculty academic advisors across all of UAA’s campuses. With over 17,500 appointment summary reports logged, we have reached 100% of professional academic advisor adoption on the Anchorage, Mat-Su, and KPC campuses. From Fall 2018 to Spring 2019, we saw a 54% increase in advisor adoption, a 22% increase in advising appointments, and a 41% increase in appointment summary reports.

Student Mobile App Adoption

In 2018-2019, we focused on promoting the SWT mobile app to first year students. In August 2018, 72% of students who attended Howl Days downloaded the app. Since launching the appointment scheduling feature in Spring 2019, we experienced a 55% increase in mobile app downloads.
Coordinated Care Network

Seawolf Track’s capabilities expand beyond academic advising. In FY 19, residence life and CARE team employees within the Dean of Students Office completed training and began using the platform. For FY 20, the coordinated care network will expand to Financial Aid through a series of training sessions. This will allow users to make in-platform referrals to one another, increasing the connectivity of offices and advancing student success strategies.

Pilot: Campus-Wide Registration Campaign

After launching the appointment scheduling feature in the mobile app, we piloted a campus-wide advising appointment campaign targeting current students who had not yet registered for Fall 2019.

Pilot: Faculty Alerts & Progress Reports

In Spring 2019, we conducted a pilot of the faculty alerts and progress report function within SWT. With six faculty members and twelve course sections, we targeted week two (attendance/engagement concern), week four (academic performance concern), and week 6 (at risk of failing concern).

Pilot: Success Markers

EAB’s Navigate advising platform includes a predictive analytics dashboard for academic advisors – what they call a 30-second gut check. This dashboard includes information like a student’s current GPA, number of DFWs, and an index that shows whether or not a student is at risk (red, yellow, or green) of not being successful in their current degree program. The risk index is based on the success markers for the major that are put into the system. This requires the faculty in that major/degree program to indicate what courses (and grades in those courses) are indicators of a student’s success early in the major. Determining the success markers for each major will allow us to unlock that feature of Seawolf Tracks. In Spring 2019, we conducted a pilot of determining success markers in three departments. We will ask all degree programs to complete a success marker template in Fall 2019.

FY20 Plan for Seawolf Tracks

The next page summarizes the FY20 plan for expanding Seawolf Tracks, along with the primary and secondary drivers of student success and our tools, focus, and targets.
SEAWOLF TRACKS: FY20 PLAN

Our Tools
:: Student Mobile App
:: Navigate Advising Platform (faculty/staff)
:: Coordinated Care Network
:: Institution Reports
:: Student Success Markers

Our Focus
Mission: To increase student success at UAA through high-quality academic advising and holistic student support that utilizes predictive analytics, integrative advising and coordinated care, faculty alerts and progress reports, and student support, and student-friendly mobile convenience.

Our Target
Undergraduate students
Academic Advisors
Faculty
Student Support Services
Deans and Directors

To-Date: 7/1/2019
:: 3 onsite trainings from EAB
:: 3 webinar trainings
:: Training of residence life and CARE team
:: Successful pilot of faculty progress reports
:: Development of alerts team
:: Pilot of success markers in 3 degrees
:: Banners & print material for mobile app promo
:: Launch of appointment scheduler
:: Pilot campus-wide registration campaign

Current Reality
:: 100% professional advisor adoption
:: 13,000+ student interactions logged
:: 17,500+ appointments logged
:: 17,500+ reports logged
:: 2,200 mobile app downloads
:: Three mobile app quick poll campaigns

Future Date: 7/1/2020
One Year Critical Success Factors
:: Faculty adoption of progress reports/alerts
:: Advising integration of reports/alerts
:: Coordinated Care integration
:: Community Campus integration
:: Ongoing SWT training program
:: Finalization of success markers
:: Reliable use of institution reports

Future Date: 7/1/2021
The Picture
:: 8,000 student mobile app downloads
:: Case assignments with reports/alerts
:: Financial Aid integration
:: Academic Planning integration
:: Predictive analytics in advising

Secondary Drivers of Student Success
Develop ongoing training program
Host EAB onsite
Develop alerts workflow in collaboration with CARE
Create culture of faculty/advisor collaboration
Revise student comm plan, integrate with syllabi
Conduct departmental visits / host open forums

FY 20 Primary Drivers of Student Success
To equip faculty, professional advisors, and staff with tools to better advise and support students in their academic goals.
To develop a clear and cohesive coordinated care strategy for faculty and staff to support students in their academic, physical and emotional needs.
To promote widespread adoption of EAB tools for students, faculty, staff, deans, and community campuses.
Background

As we integrated the EAB Navigate/Seawolf Tracks tools across UAA, we found that the tools necessitated a conversation around the quality and consistency of academic advising across our campuses. In order to effectively implement SWT, we had to effectively communicate and train within a complex, cumbersome, and shared/split academic advising structure.

Simultaneously, the UAA 2018 NWCCU Peer Evaluation Report showed two concerns regarding advising:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Report Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>2d</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>The inconsistency of advising, both in terms of standards and implementation, are resulting in inconsistent messages and service to students. Colleges and campuses need to continue their work to establishing an overarching structure for advising systems and be uniformly committed to the training and development of advisors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>4.A.−4.B.</td>
<td>Advising (Core Theme 3)</td>
<td>In some colleges there has been confusion reported by faculty members about their participation in advising, given the changes and improvements that have been implemented and in assessments of faculty service commitments. Efforts should be made to assess and clarify faculty’s role in advising.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic Advising Steering Committee

In response, the Vice Provost for Student Success established the Academic Advising Steering Committee (AASC) in Spring 2019, which is comprised of an advising lead and an academic advisor from each college and two community campus representatives. The AASC charge is to provide strategic direction, policy recommendations, and implementation strategies that support student success through consistent and comprehensive advising across UAA. The Committee is specifically charged to develop:

- Policy for consistency in hiring, training, and professional development of academic advisors
- Strategy for standardization, as appropriate, for academic advisor position descriptions, evaluation mechanisms, and career laddering opportunities
- Clarity in expectations for advisors’ use of advising tools and technology and mechanisms for accountability in fulfilling expectations
- A streamlined and strategic communication plan
- A common advising campaign calendar for all primary academic advisors
- A plan for reviewing best practices at peer institutions.

The committee is comprised of representatives from each college and the Office of Academic Affairs. Membership blends representation from individuals providing direct student advising and those in academic leadership roles. Two community campus advising coordinators are also included.

Banner Advisor Assignment Maintenance

One of the first tasks of this committee was to ensure the consistent accuracy of Banner advising assignments. The initial clean-up of advising assignments was conducted in Fall 2018 in order to prepare for the Seawolf Tracks appointment scheduling feature launch. This committee identified areas of student advising transition and responsible parties to update the advisor assignments in Banner.

Academic Advising Roles and Responsibilities

Another priority for this committee has been to develop clear academic advising roles and responsibilities, distinguishing between an academic advisor and a faculty mentor. This initiative has led to academic advising being completely housed within the Office of Academic Affairs. Current progress is being made on minimum training standards for each role.

Common Campaign Calendar

This committee has established a common 2019-2020 advising appointment campaign calendar for campus-wide use. These campaigns will be conducted each semester to strategically target students in peak times for registration, academic standing support, and kudos to students who successfully their coursework.

FY20 Plan for Academic Advising Alignment

The FY20 plan for academic advising alignment progress appears next.
## Our Values

- **Educational Philosophy**
- **Consistency**
- **Accountability**
- **Assessment**
- **Communication**
- **Collaboration**

## Our Focus

**Mission:** A consistent and positive student experience of academic advising across UAA’s campuses that supports student success.

*The Academic Advising Steering Committee will recommend policies related to this mission.*

## Our Target

- Undergraduate, degree seeking students
- Academic Advisors
- College Deans and Associate Deans

## To-Date: 7/1/2019

- Identification of current shared/split model
- Research best practices across the nation
- Presentation to Provost and college Deans
- Identification of advising leads team
- Establishment of Academic Advising Steering Committee
- Promotion of common adoption of Seawolf Tracks
- Banner advisor assignment maintenance plan

## Current Reality

### One-Year Plan

**Future Date: 7/1/2020**

- **One Year Critical Success Factors**
  - Memos of Collaboration with each college/campus
  - Develop assessment metrics
  - Design an ongoing training program
  - Common use of advising technologies

### Two-Year Picture

**Future Date: 7/1/2021**

- **The Picture**
  - Consistent student experience
  - Trained and certified academic advisors
  - Standard titles, position descriptions, and pay
  - Aligned internal processes

## Secondary Drivers of Student Success

- Develop standard roles/responsibilities
- Identify areas of training for each role
- Policies to maintain advisor assignments
- Develop MoCs for each college/campus

## FY 20 Primary Drivers of Student Success

- To establish an overarching structure for advising systems and be uniformly committed to the training and development of advisors.

- To ensure consistency in advising both in terms of standards & implementation, resulting in consistent messages & services to students.

- To annually assess the effectiveness of academic advising across UAA.

- To establish a culture of holistic advising as part of student success across campus.

---

**UAA NWCCU March 2020 Ad Hoc Report**

**Appendix C:** UAA Student Success Year End Report (FY19)
Background

In Spring 2018, the Vice Provost for Student Success held a series of open forums on student success including an exercise on whether or not meta-majors or academic pathways would be right for UAA. The benefits of pathways include giving first year students information about various majors and career options within their general area of interest and allowing them to build a strong foundation of success as they determine their choice of major. Academic Pathways can reduce the cost of switching majors for students. The feedback from the open forums clearly indicated that the campus wanted to explore the implementation of Academic Pathways at UAA. In August 2018, we established the Academic Pathway Steering Committee. The committee includes the following members:

- **College of Engineering:**
  - Rob Lang, Associate Dean for Academics, Professor of Civil Engineering
- **College of Arts and Sciences:**
  - Bill Myers, Professor of History
  - Timothy Smith, Associate Dean of the Performing and Fine Arts & Humanities, Professor of Music
  - Cheryl Lampman, Vice Provost for Student Success, Professor of Psychology
  - Cheryl Wilga, Associate Dean for Math and Natural and Social Sciences, Professor of Biology
  - Hsing-Wen Hu, Chair of Department of Teaching and Learning, Associate Professor of Elementary Education
- **Community and Technical College:**
  - Deanne Woodard, Associate Dean for University Studies
- **College of Health:**
  - Kendra Sticka, Director of Student Success for Health Programs
  - Carrie King, Professor, Dietetics and Nutrition (Chair)
- **College of Business and Public Policy:**
  - Lynn Koshiyama, Interim Associate Dean, Professor of Accounting
- **Community Campus:**
  - Bettina Kipp Lavea, Professor of Counseling
- **Ex-Officio Members:**
  - Susan Kalina, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
  - Dan Kline, Professor of English and Director of General Education

The aim of this group was to categorize individual majors into academic “umbrellas” that share a similar focus (e.g., Engineering, Business, Visual and Performing Arts) and to create first year course maps. These maps are advising templates for students that will guide them through a successful first year based on:

1. their level of preparation in writing and math,
2. their career and major interests,
3. historical data on markers of success for UAA students in various courses and majors,
4. completion of key foundational courses that the UAA faculty have determined are necessary for success in a given degree path, and
5. targeted GERs based on pass rates per level of preparation.

The Academic Pathways

Forty baccalaureate Academic Pathway maps have been created, four maps per level of placement for each Pathway. Over the course of the next year (FY20), pathway maps will be created for Associate of Applied Science programs.

The current Academic Pathways include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Health Sciences &amp; Professions</th>
<th>Service Professions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Humanities &amp; Communication</td>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Computer Science</td>
<td>Industry &amp; Technical Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts</td>
<td>Natural Sciences &amp; Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic Pathways is about helping students to complete successfully their first 30 credits, including the necessary Tier 1 GERs in Math, Writing, and Communication. The courses in the maps are selected, using an evidence-based process, to prepare students for a successful college experience. The courses are chosen based on the students’ level of math and writing preparation and data on course pass rates. The recommended courses meet the initial requirements in many of the majors represented in the Pathway, and will prepare students to continue on to complete program prerequisite course requirements. They will also be courses likely to meet degree requirements for students who move into a complete different academic pathway or major. An example of an academic pathway course map for the first 30 credits in the Business pathway appears on the next two pages. This is an example of a pathway for a student who enters UAA ready for Tier 1 GER-level math and writing.
Academic Pathway Front Page Example

**Seawolf Tracks**

**ACADEMIC PATHWAYS: BUSINESS**

**Student McPerson**

**FIRST 30 CREDITS AT UAA**

The Business Pathway at UAA prepares students for leadership at the frontiers of a changing world. We help diverse and growing communities in Alaska and elsewhere meet their challenges by delivering the highest quality business and public policy education.

**EXAMPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST 15 CREDITS</th>
<th>CREDITS</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>DONE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication GER: WRTG A111</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Skills GER: MATH A121 or MATH A151</td>
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<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication GER: COMM A111 or COMM A241</td>
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<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts/Humanities/AK Native Themed/Natural Sciences GER*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway Foundation Course: BA 151</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SEMESTER TOTAL: 15**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEXT 15 CREDITS</th>
<th>CREDITS</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>DONE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication GER: WRTG A212</td>
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<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>□</td>
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<td>Quantitative Skills GER: MATH A221 or MATH A261</td>
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<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts/Humanities/AK Native Themed/Natural Sciences GER*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts/Humanities/AK Native Themed/Natural Sciences GER*</td>
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<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathway Foundation Course: CIS A110</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SEMESTER TOTAL: 15**

**FOUNDATION COURSES IN THE BUSINESS PATHWAY ARE THE FIRST REQUIRED COURSES WITHIN EACH MAJOR.**

Tier 1 General Education Requirements (GERs) teach basic college-level skills that are the foundation for further study.

Tier 2 GERs provide a wide academic experience across a range of disciplines, including natural and social sciences, fine arts, humanities, culture, and Alaska Native peoples.

**SELECT YOUR MAJOR**

- ACCOUNTING (BBA)
- ECONOMICS (BA OR BBA)
- FINANCE (BBA)
- MANAGEMENT (BBA)
- MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (BBA)
- MARKETING (BBA)
- GLOBAL LOGISTICS & SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT (BBA)

**NOTES**

*See recommended list of GER courses on page two.*

**CONTACTS**

Advisor: NA
Phone: 907-789-1234
Email: seadvisors@alaska.edu
Office: Building Name 142
Academic Pathway Introductory Courses

Business and Engineering already had program-specific introductory courses, BA A151 and ENGR A151, which allow students to survey the different careers and specifics of the fields. In 2019, the College of Health followed suit and created an introductory course, HLTH A151, suitable for most majors in the Health Sciences and Professions pathway. It is the hope of the committee that each pathway will provide an introductory course or other method to better expose students to the opportunities in their field of interest.
Dissemination and Registration

During Spring 2019, all First Year Advisors were trained in how to advise using Academic Pathways and conduct pathway-based advising at Howl Days throughout the Spring and Summer of 2019. All incoming, degree-seeking students will be advised based on Academic Pathways. At the Howl Days events, each student receives a customized pathway sheet with pre-selected courses based on their writing and math preparation and is guided through the registration process.

FY20 Plan for Academic Pathways

The next page contains the FY20 plan for Academic Pathways, including our vision, targets, and primary and secondary drivers of student success.
In 2017, UAA announced the UAA 2020 strategic plan. Through this process, UAA faculty, staff, and students proposed a set of values to guide campus actions: student success, excellence, access, and affordability. The

### Our Values

- Optimize students’ success
- Foundational Tier 1 courses
- Customized advising
- Reduce credit & financial risk
- Data-based course planning
- Reduce self-advising

### Our Focus

**Mission:** To provide students a clear pathway for their first 30 credits, starting before their first day at UAA.

*The Academic Pathway Steering Committee will create the course maps related to this mission.*

### Our Target

- UAA students with 0-30 hrs.
- Degree Seeking
- GER and Pre-GER Students

### Current Reality

**To-Date: 7/1/2019**

- Established 10 Academic Pathways for baccalaureate degrees
- Incorporated pass rate data for Tier 2 GERs per level of placement
- Solicited feedback from professional academic advisors in each college
- Designed the customizable maps
- Hosted 6 open forums
- Trained First Year Advisors
- Incorporated into the first year advising workflow

### Future Date: 7/1/2020

**One-Year Plan**

**One Year Critical Success Factors**

- Design AAS Academic Pathways
- Develop Academic Pathways website
- Align college degree plans with APs
- Assess data from Fall 2019 cohort
- Alignment for admission with APs

**Two-Year Picture**

**Future Date: 7/1/2021**

**The Picture**

- Academic Pathways for all degree programs
- Clear student-facing communication on web
- The elimination of exploratory/undeclared
- Increased 1st-2nd year retention
- A reduction in major switching

### Secondary Drivers of Student Success

- Develop AAS Academic Pathways
- Work to align Pathways with application/admission
  - Develop clear Pathways website
  - Align college websites with Pathways philosophy
- Work with IR to monitor Fall ’19 cohort

### FY 20 Primary Drivers of Student Success

- To develop clear pathways, first year advising maps, for all degree programs.
- To integrate Academic Pathways into the prospective, incoming first year student experience.
- To assess the success of Academic Pathways with retention and major switching metrics.
UAA 2020 value of student success promises to assist students in defining, revising, and meeting their academic and personal goals.

In Fall 2018, half of first-time baccalaureate-seeking students entered UAA academically underprepared; 39.5% placed into GER-level Math and 47.3% into GER-level Writing. Students switch majors frequently; 27% in year one and 46% by year two. On average, students complete a bachelor’s degrees in 6.8 years, 10.5 semesters, and with more than 150 credits – nearly a year of excess coursework. UAA retains about 71% of bachelor’s-seeking students for the second year, 58% for the third year, and graduates 31.5% after 6 years. Alaska Native students are retained at much lower rates and are 2.5 times less likely to graduate in 6 years than White students.

The overarching goals for UAA student success are clear.

- Increase the first to second year retention rate of all entrants
- Increase persistence rate of all students from second to third year
- Increase the 6-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time baccalaureate degree-seekers to 35% by AY25
- Increase the number of graduates in high demand job areas by 2% per year
- Lower the cost per award by removing barriers and improving efficiencies

The first priority was to address first year retention by creating a First Year Student Advising and Success program to welcome, connect and prepare first time, degree-seeking students. We also developed Academic Pathways (i.e., meta-majors) and employed placement level data to develop data-driven first year course maps. Simultaneously, we began implementing the tools of EAB’s Student Success Collaborative (the Seawolf Tracks mobile app and the advising platform).

Implementing these initiatives revealed a complex, cumbersome, and shared/split academic advising structure. In response, we developed the Academic Advising Steering Committee, which is comprised of an advising lead and an academic advisor from each college and two community campus representatives. Through the work of this committee, we look forward to strategic steps in advising alignment, such as Memos of Collaboration with each college, a comprehensive advisor training program, as well as standards in pay, job descriptions, and performance benchmarks.

In summary, UAA Student Success accomplished the following during FY19:

- Designed and employed Academic Pathways for first-time baccalaureate degree seeking students
- Developed a First Year Student Advising and Success program
- Implemented the EAB Student Success Collaborative/Navigate platform and companion Student Mobile App (aka Seawolf Tracks)
- Integrated an event-based approach to advising and registration with orientation
- Assembled the Academic Advising Steering Committee to enhance advising alignment

Moving into FY20, UAA Student Success will continue to advance these initiatives while also developing a comprehensive first year experience program, increasing faculty involvement in student success, identifying and eliminating student barriers to success, and improving the academic advising experience.
### Student Success Advisory Council Members - 2018-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claudia Lampman</td>
<td>Vice Provost for Student Success, Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page Brannon, Head</td>
<td>Instruction &amp; Research Services, Associate Professor, Consortium Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeane Breinig</td>
<td>Associate Vice Chancellor of Alaska Natives and Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracey Burke</td>
<td>Professor of Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Dannenberg, Director</td>
<td>Academic Innovations &amp; eLearning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Dede, Special Asst</td>
<td>Sr. Vice Provost, Institutional Effectiveness, Engagement, and Academic Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Foran, Director</td>
<td>TRIO Student Support Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon Gramse, Associate</td>
<td>Professor, College Preparatory &amp; Developmental Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis Hedwig, Assistant</td>
<td>Professor of Health Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erin Holmes, Associate</td>
<td>Provost Institutional Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veronica Howard, Assistant</td>
<td>Professor of Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carrie King, Professor</td>
<td>Dietetics &amp; Nutrition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Kirk, Professor</td>
<td>College Preparatory &amp; Developmental Studies</td>
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<td>Dan Kline, Director</td>
<td>General Education and Professor of English</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Mouracade, Dean</td>
<td>University Honors College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Megan Olson, Vice Chancellor</td>
<td>Chancellor of University Advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LuAnn Piccard, Chair</td>
<td>Associate Professor, Engineering, Science, &amp; Project Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valerie Robideaux, Director</td>
<td>of First Year Student Advising and Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denise Runge, Dean</td>
<td>Community and Technical College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendra Sticka, Director</td>
<td>Student Success for Health Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathi Trawver, Associate</td>
<td>Professor of Social Work and BSW Program Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lora Volden, Associate</td>
<td>Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Weaver, Director</td>
<td>University Housing/Dining/Conference Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Williams, Associate</td>
<td>Professor of Alaska Native Studies, Faculty Senate President</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**First Year Student Advising & Success Framework**

*The advising workflow for degree-seeking students in their first 30 credits*

- **Admitted**
  - Committed students are assigned a First Year Advisor (FYA) based on Academic Pathway
  - FYAs outreach to welcome and provide onboarding assistance

- **Enrolled**
  - Orientation, advisement & registration based on Academic Pathway and WRTD and MATH course match.

- **Engaged**
  - FYA proactive caseload management for success guidance & support
  - Workshops & events
  - 2nd semester advisement & registration with FYA

- **Retained**
  - First year self evaluation
  - College advisement transition plan & advisor assignment or FYA Bridge Plan
FYSAS New Student Engagement and Retention Plan

**Welcoming, connecting, and preparing new students as they move from admitted to engaged and retained**

1. **New Student Assistance**
   - First Year Advisors provide help to incoming students who contact the office. These conversations often involve next steps for placement testing/course matching, the process for advising and registration at Howl Days, and common first year questions.

2. **Advisor Assignment**
   - First Year Advisors are assigned to confirmed students. At that time, the FYAs outreach to students, introducing them/herself and communicating next steps for orientation registration, placement testing, and other incoming student check list items.
   - Out-of-area students are advised over the phone and encouraged to attend the next Howl Days session.

3. **Academic Pathway Prep**
   - First Year Advisors design students’ Academic Pathway maps based on field of interest and level of preparation. Academic Pathways encourage completion of foundational Tier 1 GEs and use historical pass rate data by level of placement to optimize students’ success.

4. **Orientation & Registration**
   - First Year Advisors & WebTrack Leaders greet students at orientation, connect them to other students and campus information/resources, and walk them through the advising and registration process based on their Academic Pathway per placement.

5. **Proactive Outreach & Support**
   - First Year Advisors continue to check in, support, and remind the students of outstanding checklist items throughout the first months of the semester. During this time, First Year Advisors connect students to support resources to encourage academic, social, and emotional wellness.

6. **Reregistration & Transition**
   - First Year Advisors follow the College Advisement Transition Plan and guide students through next semester registration advising appointments and continuing student checklist items.

---

College Advisement Transition Plan

**Successfully transitioning students from their First Year Advisor to their College Advisor**

1. **Academic Assessment**
   - First Year Advisor reviews and assesses the student’s academic standing, holds, course history and advising appointment notes.
   - Good academic standing
   - Met or ready for Tier 1 GEs
   - Resolved any account holds
   - Declared a major

2. **Adjustment Assessment**
   - Together, the First Year Advisor and the student discuss and evaluate the student's confidence in:
     - Navigating UAA technologies & the registration process
     - Locating student support resources
     - Initiating & preparing for advising appointments
     - Articulating academic and/or career goals
     - Resolving common account holds
     - Understanding basic financial responsibilities, UAA dates, deadlines, and policies

3. **Advisor Assignment**
   - First Year Advisor and the student finalize the transition process by completing the following:
     - Change of Advisor form
     - Removing the First Year Advisor and assigning the appropriate College Advisor in Banner
     - Planning when to schedule an appointment with the College Advisor
     - Uploading College Advisement Transition Plan and related documents into Seawolf Tracks

**Bridge Plans**

First Year Advisors will identify students who do not meet academic and/or adjustment benchmarks and will work with the student to develop a Bridge Plan. Bridge Plans set concrete success goals for the duration of one semester but may be extended if further guidance is needed. Students will stay with their First Year Advisor until the successful completion of the Bridge Plan. Consultations and shared advising assignments with a College Advisor will be incorporated into the Bridge Plan if the student has identified a major/program of study.
TO: Academic Advising Steering Committee

THROUGH: Claudia Lampman, Vice Provost for Student Success  
Claudia Lampman

FROM: Valerie Robideaux, Director of First Year Student Advising & Success, Co-Chair
Kendra Sticka, Director of Student Success, College of Health, Co-Chair

CC: Jeff Jesse, Dean, College of Health
Karen Markel, Dean, College of Business and Public Policy
Kenrick Mock, Interim Dean, College of Engineering
John Petratis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Denise Runge, Dean, Community and Technical College
Gary Turner, Director, Kenai Peninsula College
Talis Colberg, Director, Mat-Su College

RE: FY19-FY20 Committee Charge

DATE: February 19, 2019

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the new Academic Advising Steering Committee. The goal of this committee is to strategically address two concerns raised in the UAA 2018 Seven NWCCU Peer Evaluation Report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Report Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>2d</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>The inconsistency of advising, both in terms of standards and implementation, are resulting in inconsistent messages and service to students. Colleges and campuses need to continue their work to establishing an overarching structure for advising systems and be uniformly committed to the training and development of advisors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>4.A.-4.B.</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>In some colleges there has been confusion reported by faculty members about their participation in advising, given the changes and improvements that have been implemented and in assessments of faculty service commitments. Efforts should be made to assess and clarify faculty’s role in advising.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHARGE

To provide strategic direction, policy recommendations, and implementation strategies that support student success through consistent and comprehensive advising across UAA. The Committee is specifically charged to develop:

- Policy for consistency in hiring, training, and professional development of academic advisors
- Strategy for standardization, as appropriate, for academic advisor position descriptions, evaluation mechanisms, and career laddering opportunities
- Clarity in expectations for advisors’ use of advising tools and technology and mechanisms for accountability in fulfilling expectations
- Common advising outcomes, metrics, and benchmarks, and mechanisms for reporting on each
- A streamlined and strategic communication plan
- A common advising campaign calendar for all primary academic advisors
- A plan for reviewing best practices at peer institutions.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The committee will be comprised of representatives from each college and the Office of Academic Affairs. Membership will blend representation from individuals providing direct student advising and those in academic leadership roles.

*Valerie Robideaux, Director, First Year Student Advising and Success (Co-Chair)*  
*Kendra Sticka, Director, Student Success, College of Health (Co-Chair)*  
Hannah Tozier, First Year Advisor for Alaska Native Student Success  
*Claudia Lampman, Vice Provost for Student Success*  
Lynda Hernandez, Student Success Coordinator, College of Health  
*John Mun, Academic Coordinator, College of Arts & Sciences*  
Rhiannon Elliot, Academic Advisor, College of Arts & Sciences  
Allyson Berg, Director/Academic Advisor, College of Business & Public Policy  
*Leesa Arnes, Administrative Specialist, Community & Technical College*  
Whitney Flores, Student Success Coach, Community & Technical College  
*Jennie Brock, Associate Professor and Chair, Mechanical Engineering*  
Zlata Lokteva, Academic Advisor, College of Engineering  
*Valerie Svancara, First Year Advisor, Seawolf Tracks Mobile App lead*  
*Bettina Kipp, Professor of Counseling, Kenai Peninsula College*  
Sandy Gravley, Director, Student Services, Mat-Su College

*Also members of the Seawolf Tracks Leadership Team*

**TERM OF SERVICE:** 2019-2020 (subject to change)

**TIME COMMITMENT:** Once a month until further determined; some work in between meetings (a few hours per month).

**INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES:** Members have been appointed for their expertise, experience, and role at the institution. In addition to the contributions you will make on this Committee, including preparing for meetings and attending to assigned tasks, you will be asked to serve as a liaison to the colleges, keep your supervisors informed of the Committee’s discussions, and solicit their ideas.
First Year Academic Advisors welcome first-time, degree seeking students to campus, connect them to student success and support resources, and prepare them for success by helping them register for their foundational, first year courses in their chosen Academic Pathway. **Unique Responsibilities:** First-time, degree seeking students < 30 credits.

- New student onboarding
- Academic Pathway advising and registration.
- Academic and financial appeals support (i.e., petitions, SAP appeals)
- Student support guidance
- High touch outreach & support

**Learning Outcome Examples:**
*Student understands...*
- How to use UAonline to register for classes
- What GERs are
- What catalog year means
- Where to find academic support, tutoring, DSS

College Academic Advisors are professional or faculty advisors employed by each college to advise degree-seeking students in a declared major or program, assist students in course selection and registration, academic planning, academic probation and appeals. **Faculty who serve as Academic Advisors** have academic advising responsibilities within their workloads to fulfill the same duties expected of a Professional Academic Advisor. **Unique Responsibilities:**

- Degree planning and graduation audit
- Academic and financial appeals support (i.e., petitions, SAP appeals)
- Student support guidance
- Proactive student outreach

**Learning Outcome Examples:**
*Student understands...*
- Courses required for the major
- Prerequisites needed to be successful
- Key milestones for degree progress

Faculty Mentors serve upper-class degree-seeking students specifically in the areas of degree completion, selection of capstone coursework, internship and practicum placement, undergraduate research and scholarship opportunities, and career mentorship and post-graduate study guidance. Student may still see their academic advisor for general degree assistance. **Unique Responsibilities:**

- Capstone coursework
- Discipline completion guidance
- Career/post-graduate guidance

**Learning Outcome Examples:**
*Student understands...*
- Best advanced coursework, placements, and experiences to help achieve their career or post-graduate study goals.
- Opportunities for undergraduate research or other high impact experiences to build resume
First Year and College Academic Advisors will...

- Provide **ACCURATE INFORMATION** about class registration, academic requirements, opportunities outside the classroom, internship opportunities, campus resources, career information, career exploration and career preparation.
- Provide **PROMPT REFERRAL** to other people and offices who can best address students’ needs.
- Display **PROFESSIONAL RESPECT** of students’ unique skills, academic and career interests, and personal circumstances.
- Practice **FRIENDLY SUPPORT** of students’ educational goals, academic plans, and career choices.
- Pay **FULL ATTENTION** to the concerns, questions, and academic/career-related issues students bring to an advising session and offer a **CONFIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT** in which to address those issues.
- Encourage students to make **APPROPRIATE** and **INFORMED** education and career DECISIONS.
- Optimize key UA advising technologies (UA Online, Degree Works, Banner-Student, Seawolf Tracks) and **EDUCATE** students on how to effectively navigate essential UA technologies.

Students will...

- Make a **GENUINE EFFORT** to learn about class registration, academic requirements, opportunities outside the classroom, internship opportunities, campus resources, and career options.
- **CAREFULLY PLAN** for advising sessions by reading appropriate materials, navigating essential UA technologies, forming questions, and considering academic options.
- Accept **RESPONSIBILITY** for **ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALISM**: responding to university emails, initiating academic and career advising sessions, arriving on time, and following through with decisions made during the session.
- **COMMUNICATE HONESTLY** about unique skills interests, personal circumstances, and career values.
- Become **ACTIVELY INTERESTED** in planning a realistic academic program that meets individual academic needs and career goals.
- Take **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY** for earning success and accept the consequences of academic and personal choice.
TO: Claudia Lampman, Vice Provost for Student Success

FROM: Valerie Robideaux, Director of First Year Student Advising & Success, AASC Co-Chair
       Kendra Sticka, Director of Student Success, College of Health, AASC Co-Chair

CC: Jeff Jesse, Dean, College of Health
    Karen Markel, Dean, College of Business and Public Policy
    Kenrick Mock, Interim Dean, College of Engineering
    John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
    Denise Runge, Dean, Community and Technical College
    Gary Turner, Director, Kenai Peninsula College
    Talis Colberg, Director, Mat-Su College
    Lindsey Chadwell, UAA Registrar

RE: Banner Advisor Assignment Maintenance Process Recommendations

DATE: April 22, 2019

Maintaining accurate assignment of advisors in Banner is critical to ensuring that students know who their advisor is, to assist support staff with referring students to the correct person for their advising needs, and to maximize utilization of technology tools that draw from Banner advising data.

The Academic Advising Steering Committee (AASC) recommends the following delineation of responsibility for advisor assignments to support a consistent process. Within this process, each college dean must identify an Advising Lead who will be responsible for ensuring processes assigned to the college level are completed. AASC recommends that the UAA Change of Major form be modified to include an option to list a secondary academic advisor below the current academic advisor assignment. If this process is implemented, the AASC will re-evaluate the process in the spring of 2020 to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency and make further recommendations as warranted.
## Banner Advisor Assignment Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisor Assignment Point</th>
<th>Process and Responsible Units</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student admitted to UAA</td>
<td>First Year Student Advising &amp; Success (FYSAS) routinely receives lists of students newly admitted to the UAA Anchorage campus. Students who meet first year advising criteria (outlined below) will be assigned to a first year advisor in Banner by FYSAS. The name of students who do not meet first year advising criteria will be sent to the college or campus advising lead of the student's major. The college or campus advising lead will be responsible for ensuring Banner advisor assignments. For students pursuing degrees at the UAA Anchorage campus, but taking classes and seeking supplemental advising at a community campus, the community campus advisor will assign themselves as a secondary advisor in Banner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of major form completed</td>
<td>Academic units will be responsible for accurate completion of Change of Major forms. Individuals approved to sign the change of major form must know the unit process for advisor assignments. Degree Services will be responsible for entering the advisor assignment in Banner when they enter the student's new major.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition from FYA to college advisor</td>
<td>The first year advisor who is transitioning the student will enter the new college advisor assignment in Banner. FYSAS will provide the college advising leads a list of students who have been transitioned to college advisors at least once per semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of advisor within an academic unit without a change of major (e.g. moving from professional to faculty advisor)</td>
<td>The advisor who is transferring the student to a new advisor will enter the new advisor assignment in Banner OR send the new advisor assignment notification to the advising lead. Prior to the assignment, there will be communication about the transition with the new advisor and the student.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Advisor leaves the institution | When a professional advisor leaves the institution, the advising lead for that advisor’s unit is responsible for ensuring that Banner advisor assignments are updated with the students’ new advisor(s).

When a faculty advisor leaves the institution, that faculty member’s supervisor is responsible for notifying the college advising lead of new advisor assignments. The college advising lead is responsible for ensuring advisor assignments are updated in Banner. |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student graduates or is inactivated according to UAA policy</td>
<td>Degree Services will remove advisors associated with the student from Banner.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**First Year Advising Criteria**

Students meeting the following criteria upon admission to UAA will be assigned a first year advisor as their primary advisor:

- Bachelor’s level degree-seeking in a program on the Anchorage campus
- Less than 30 earned credits
- Placement into one or more pre-GER courses and/or have not selected a major

Students not meeting these criteria will be assigned a college level advisor as their primary advisor. A first year advisor will be assigned, as appropriate, as a secondary advisor.
TO: First Year Experience Committee

THROUGH: Claudia Lampman, Vice Provost for Student Success

FROM: Valerie Robideaux, Director of First Year Student Advising & Success (chair)

CC: John Petraitis, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Denise Runge, Dean, Community and Technical College
Bruce Schutlz, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Betty Walters, Interim Director, Kodiak College

RE: FY20 Committee Charge

DATE: September 27, 2019

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the new First Year Experience Committee. The goal of this committee is to strategically improve first year retention and academic performance by creating an intentional and well-developed first year experience program at UAA.

CHARGE
To provide strategic direction, program recommendations, and implementation strategies that support first year student success through consistent and comprehensive academic and engagement programs. The team is specifically charged to align UAA with national best practices by developing recommendations for:

- first year learning outcomes, metrics, and benchmarks for student success
- first year courses and/or learning communities
- a strategic first year student communication plan
- streamlined efforts in programs, resources, and checklists for first year students

MEMBERSHIP
The committee will be comprised of the following representatives:

Barbara Brown, Academic Counselor & Professor of Counseling at Kodiak College
Cassie Keefer, Executive Director of Admissions
Steven Johnson, Associate Professor, Department of Journalism & Communication
Joel Potter, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy
Kim Morton, Director, Student Life & Leadership
*Valerie Robideaux, Director, First Year Student Advising and Success (chair)
Carolyn Fautanu, Department of Quantitative Studies
Greg Hartley, Department of Writing

TERM OF SERVICE: 2019-2020 (subject to change)
TIME COMMITMENT: Twice a month until further determined

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES: Members have been appointed for their expertise, experience, and role at the institution. In addition to the contributions you will make on this Committee, including preparing for meetings and attending to assigned tasks, you will be asked to serve as a liaison to your departments, keep your supervisors informed of the Committee’s discussions, and solicit their ideas.
Title: Peer Learning Assistant

Job Description:

UAA is recruiting conscientious undergraduate students to serve as Peer Learning Assistants (PLAs) for the Spring 2020 semester. PLAs are UAA undergraduate students who support fellow students in a high demand course which the PLA previously completed with a very high degree of success. PLAs are embedded in 'gateway' courses that are critical for students to progress in their chosen degree path. Gateway courses require students to demonstrate comprehension of course material so that they are prepared to complete other major requirements.

Knowledge Skills, and Abilities:

Ideal candidates must possess a high degree of knowledge in the subject matter of the course as demonstrated by their own grades and performance in the course to which they will be assigned and/or their previous work as a peer learning assistant, tutor, grader, supplemental or recitation section instructor, or teaching assistant for the desired course or a closely related course. The PLA must also be familiar with all software and database programs that students in the course need to use to successfully master the course material.

The candidate must also have excellent oral communication skills and be able to present the material to students in a clear, calm, and cohesive manner. PLAs must be comfortable initiating, leading, and facilitating discussion of the course material. PLAs must also be adept at working through difficult problems with students who are struggling with the material. Excellent interpersonal communication skills and a professional demeanor are essential to the role of peer learning assistant. PLAs must also be knowledgeable about campus and online resources to help students (e.g., the Learning Commons, Consortium Library). Finally, the PLA must show sound professional judgment, intercultural sensitivity, and maintain the strictest of confidentiality.

Job Duties:

Peer Learning Assistants (PLAs) support peers inside and outside of the classroom to improve student learning and understanding, increase course completion, and foster student success. The responsibilities of a PLA will vary somewhat by the discipline, class, and instructor. All PLAs, however, attend all class sessions, and help to facilitate course discussion, interaction, and active-learning activities. PLAs help to answer student questions, help them work through problems, and guide students in the mastery of key course concepts and skills. Some PLAs will also provide support to fellow students outside the classroom, by providing group supplemental instruction, holding recitation sections, conducting group and individual tutoring, homework review, practice solving problems, or responding to online discussion questions.

Education and Experience:

Peer Learning Assistants must be actively enrolled UAA undergraduate students in good academic standing. They must have completed the course for which they would assist with a high degree of success or have equivalent experiences that have led to the mastery of the material for the course. Previous experience as a tutor, grader, teaching assistant, supplemental or recitation instructor, or teaching assistant is highly desirable.
Chancellor’s Task Force on Alaska Native Student Success: Final Report

University of Alaska Anchorage
April 2019

Co-Chairs
Claudia Lampman, Vice Provost for Student Success, Office of the Provost
Paul Ongtooguk, Term Assistant Professor, School of Education, College of Arts and Sciences

Members
Audrey Alstrom, Regional Director, Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program
Michael Bourdukofsky, Chief Operations Officer, Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program
Jeane Breinig, Associate Vice Chancellor, Alaska Natives & Diversity
Kelly Foran, Director, TRIO Student Support Services
Beth Leonard, Professor, Alaska Native Studies
Angela Peacock, Program Manager, Bristol Bay Native Corporation Education Foundation
Don Rearden, Professor, Community & Technical College
Libby Roderick, Associate Director, Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence
Mikayla Savikko, Regional Director, Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program
Aleesha Towns-Bain, Executive Director, Bristol Bay Native Corporation Education Foundation
Deanne Woodard, Associate Dean, University Studies
Mike Ulroan, Regional Director, Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program
Michele Yatchmeneff, Assistant Professor, Civil Engineering
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Charge

In February 2019 UAA Chancellor Cathy Sandeen charged a task force on Alaska Native student success to: (1) conduct a current state analysis of existing programs serving Alaska Native students at UAA, (2) review programs effectively serving indigenous and rural students and identify evidence-based best practices that could be implemented at UAA, (3) identify 2-3 high impact interventions that should be deployed at UAA based on the current state and best-practices analyses, and (4) make recommendations for next steps.

What follows is the work of the task force between February and April 2019. Our work is grounded in the lived experiences of our Alaska Native students. So we begin with a story, where you, the reader, will first hear what the college experience is like for many of our Alaska Native students. By no means meant to encapsulate what every student faces, nor the experiences from distinct cultures, think of this as a type of parable, similar to something you might hear from any one of our students. The exception of this story being that you are thrust into his or her role, to help you understand at a deeper level the necessity for the meaningful and systemic change our institution must undertake in order to foster an academic community where Alaska Native students thrive academically, socially, and culturally.

It Takes A Village (Away From Home)

You have three first names. Your English name. Your Yup’ik name. And your nickname. From the moment the sun rises until it sets in your village in Southwestern Alaska every person you encounter throughout the course of an entire day will recognize you by one of these three names. The members of your community will look at you, nod, wave, or smile in your direction and this, coupled with them saying your name, will affirm you are exactly what the name of your Yup’ik culture means: a real human being.

There was no high school counselor to help your graduating class of five or six students, no one to assist you in preparing for or even applying to college, and the new high school teacher who first suggested that you should go to college left halfway through the year. Perhaps that teacher was also the one who was supposed to give the ACT or SAT, or maybe your village has never bothered to administer that test because of the cost. Whatever the case, you had been thinking about going to college and finally you’ve decided, and as scared as you are to leave home, you’ll give it a try.

A few people in the village suggested that you go to UAF. “They are nicer to Natives there,” one says. And another tells you that going to Fairbanks isn’t “so scary and dangerous” and the school is “all in one place and not so confusing.” While another from your village said,
“RSS, Rural Student Services helped me.” But Fairbanks is yet another plane ride away, and you’ll already need to take a small plane to Bethel and then a jet to Anchorage. A one-way ticket to Anchorage alone will be at least $600. One way...seems like a real commitment you think, when will you be home again? Will you be home to Slaaviq or starring (a Russian Orthodox celebration)?

You decide to go to UAA because at least you’ve been to Anchorage when family members were in the hospital and when you participated in state athletic events, so you’ve seen the Alaska Airlines Center, and at least you’ll have a few relatives traveling in from the village throughout the year. Perhaps you won’t feel as lonely there.

August comes more quickly than you expected, and you’re not quite prepared because you’ve spent so much of the summer helping your family with subsistence, harvesting fish and gathering berries. You received a scholarship from your village council and your regional corporation, but you need to follow up on those. You saved a little money working in the village store over the summer, and your father gives you some cash as well and tells you to be safe and protect your money and spend it wisely. He tells you to open a bank account when you get to town. Your mother makes sure you’ve got some “real food,” so you’ve got one piece of luggage and a small cardboard box that has salmon strips, a plastic Cool-whip container with akutaq (Eskimo ice cream), several quart Ziploc bags of frozen berries, and a jar of seal oil.

Bad weather delays your first flight out of the village by a few days, or perhaps it was an unexpected death in the village headed first to Bethel and then on to Anchorage. You’re so nervous that your stomach cramps, and your palms are sweaty. You stare out the window down at the endless lakes and twisting rivers and try to burn them into your memories. You know people who have left for college and never returned. Some chose not to come back, and others died or disappeared. You vow to yourself that you will return. You want to come back to make a difference in your community. Your family, your friends, your relatives, and the village need you and care about you as much as you need and care about them.

You finally get to Bethel, where you overnight with a relative who lets you crash on his couch, and then find yourself on the morning jet to Anchorage, but only after spending way too much money on food and taxi rides to and from the airport. You’re nervous about the bundle of cash in your wallet, but also wondering if it will be enough to get you by.

The person sitting next to you on the jet to Anchorage speaks so fast you can barely understand her. She’ll ask a question and doesn’t wait for you to answer, before she answers herself. When she asks what residence hall you are staying in, at first you don’t even know what she is talking about. But when she asks, “Do you know what dorm you’re in?”, you shrug. You don’t know, because they never told you. You applied and then you were accepted. And now you’re going. You assumed you would figure that out when you arrived. She continues with the
line of questions, and as the plane touches down she closes with, “What classes are you taking?” and “Didn’t classes start a few days ago?”.

There isn’t time to explain to her about the delay getting out of the village and you’re simply relieved to be getting away from the woman talking so fast, but you know that will be one of the adjustments, that move from Yupik all the time to English. You’re comfortable speaking English, but with outsiders it’s hard. They speak so quickly and they never leave room for silence or thought between words. They don’t see it when you answer with your eyebrows or understand they misunderstand your downward glances.

You pull your bag and box off the luggage carousel and head to the taxi stand. You remember a friend telling you to take an Uber, but when you downloaded that app you found out you needed a credit card.

The taxi driver asks you where you want to go and you say, “UAA.”

“Where at UAA?” he asks.

You shrug. You wish you had some sort of step by step plan of what to do and where to go once you get to Anchorage. Isn’t there just one place you can go at UAA and get help? Everyone is talking so fast, there are so many cars, buildings and paved streets. Every street has a street sign with a stop light. You don’t have pavement where you come from or stop lights. Hardly anyone has a car. Everything feels rushed and crowded. The world is on fast forward and slow motion at the same time.

“Main campus? Student Union?”

You nod and watch nervously as the taxi’s meter numbers race higher like the digits on the village’s only gas pump. Your heartbeat races higher with each additional dollar.

By the time he drops you off in front of the UAA Bookstore the meter reads: $25.70. Your money seems to be flying from your wallet.

You’ve made it.

You stand in the rain for a moment, holding your cardboard box and your bag. Now what? The parking lot seems crowded and some cars are driving around looking for a place to park, so you must be in the right place. You carry your stuff in through the doors beside the bookstore. Once inside you sit down on a row of benches and pull out your phone. There has to be someone who can tell you where to go and what to do. Someone who can help.

The students walking are on their phone, or they don’t look up or look at you. Strange. Are you invisible? You imitate them and poke around on the UAA website on your phone, looking for a clue as to where you should go.

A voice calls out your name. Your Yup’ik name. For the first time since you’ve left home you feel acknowledged. You look up to find someone you once played basketball or Native Youth Olympics with. In your language she tells you she’s just started classes and begins to ask how you are adjusting to city life, but then sees your bag and the box and realizes your situation.

“Do you know where you are staying yet?” she asks.
You shake your head. “I have class in ten minutes, but after I can help you. Or you can go see if you can check into the dorms. You don’t want to walk that far carrying all that. You can take the shuttle over there. See the shuttle sign? Ask for the one to the dorms. Or wait here for me.”

After exchanging numbers you thank her and breathe a deep sigh of relief for the good luck in running into someone who recognized you. As she’s walking off she rattles off some places to check out that help Native students, a bunch of letters, that you don’t remember, but you’ll get them from her next time. Maybe this won’t be so hard.

At this point you’re embarrassed, starting to get worried, a bit afraid what might happen if you can’t find a place to stay for the night, and questioning your decision to go to college in the first place.

You enter one of the buildings and ask for help and people pass you from one place to the next until you’re talking with someone who says they can help. They will get you temporary housing and in the morning you can come back and they will help you find an advisor. So much information is thrown at you in the span of minutes. There are problems. You’re not registered for classes. You haven’t paid your tuition, fees, or room and board. They don’t have your scholarships.

The people are kind, and trying to help, but from the tone in their voice they seem a bit dismayed at your situation. You want to tell them that no one told you any of this. They might have sent information in letters, but you didn’t always get your mail and it was hard to tell what was important and what wasn’t.

That night you sleep in your temporary room, but you don’t sleep well. You’re lonely. You’re worried about being late. You’re worried about your food that needs to be refrigerated. You’re hungry, too. That night you eat your berries that have thawed. You save your fish strips and seal oil.

The next day people help you figure out your housing situation and they find you an advisor. Many classes are full. You don’t have test scores, so you have to pay to go take an Accuplacer test. Another $25, but it requires a credit card. So you’ll need to go get a gift card from the bookstore, first. Then go to the University Center for the test, which once you check the map you learn is located far from the center of the university, and you wonder whether you should take a taxi or walk the mile to the testing center, but then decide to ask if the shuttle goes there. Thankfully it does.

By the end of the day you’ve taken the Accuplacer and gone back to the advisor. You weren’t ready for a test mentally and didn’t do as well as you should have. You’ve placed into the zero level math and writing courses. Most of the classes are full, but at least you’ll have enough credits to be considered full time. Tomorrow you’ll find the classes on your list, hopefully you haven’t missed too much or are too far behind already.
They move you from temporary housing into one of the dorm rooms. There are more people in the building then in your entire village. More people in your math class than your entire school. The first full day of classes is exhausting. You’re behind. You don’t have the textbooks. The professors talk a mile a minute. They ask a question and won’t wait for you to answer. They either think you are shy or stupid or both. You were a good student back home, but here you are just a big fish in a little pond. The other students fire answers back and have laptops and ipads. Your writing professor wants all your writing turned in online. You don’t have a laptop or an ipad. If you buy one at the bookstore you’ll be out of money.

You’re signed up for a meal plan now, too, and you eat at the dorms. At first it’s fun to be able to get almost any kind of food you want, but you’re missing your food from home. Your salmon strips and seal oil have run out. You’re not just craving the meat from home, but your body isn’t feeling well either. You feel sluggish and bloated. You want to sleep. To go to your room and curl up on your bed and stay there. You start to remember the seasons back home and your family.

The only exercise you’re getting is walking to the shuttle and up and down the stairs to class. The only time you’re outside is when you’re waiting for the shuttle to campus from the dorms or on the rare occasion when you miss a shuttle and have to walk. Back home you walked everywhere. From your house to the school to the village store. Not to mention the pick up basketball game outside the laundry mat.

You’re missing the open tundra, the rivers, the lakes, the ocean. When you are outside, you feel the trees pressing in on you. You’re not used to not being able to see out over the land. You want to go down to the ocean, to Cook Inlet, but that is a long ways away. It would cost a lot of money to take a taxi there and back. To walk would be scary. You don’t know the trail system, and you’ve heard stories.

Your studies aren’t going so well. You could only afford two of the textbooks you needed. You’ve been feeling sick and missed a few classes. You keep getting notices about your late tuition. Your scholarships haven’t come in yet from the corporation or the village council. You’ve sent and faxed your tuition bill to them, and you’re waiting for them to send the checks so you can pay for school. You didn’t know about the FAFSA, nor do you know about the taxes that are required to complete it and there are so many words and terms tossed around by people. It’s all so confusing and stressful.

Back home your brothers, uncles, and father, are getting ready for moose hunting. It’s the first time in as long as you can remember when you won’t be going. You realize you haven’t even sat down outside and listened to anything but cars, sirens and noise. You don’t ever get out on the land or water. You realize you’re almost trapped here. Your life consists of going from your dorm room to the shuttle, to class, back to the shuttle, to your room, and repeat. You have a few friends, but they are doing the same. Some of them aren’t going to class at all. Some are drinking and partying. And a couple are always off studying somewhere. One morning you
almost run right into a moose outside the residence hall. Others are also nearly running right into the giant creature. You realize you’re not using your senses, and even worry that you’re becoming invisible like the moose. You could go an entire day without someone saying any one of your three names.

The coming months will be even more challenging. You’ll become even more homesick. The AFN Conference happens and everyone comes to town and expects you to visit with them. Or someone in the village might die. Someone close or someone distant. It does not matter. You will need to go home. A family member might buy you a ticket, but then you might find out the ticket was only one way.

Or you come back, but you’re even further behind. You can work hard to try to catch up. You might contact with that girl you ran into outside the bookstore on your first day here. You ask her what were those places who help Native students. She gives you the letters again. NSS. RRANN. ANSEP. And others. Perhaps you’ll check them out. Perhaps some professor directs you to one of those places. Perhaps you meet another student who uses those services and invites you to a meeting. You make a connection with one of those organizations, however randomly it might be, and then something changes. They help you fill out scholarships and financial aid forms. They have potlatches. They have activities. They have food, and you learn to follow your sense of smell and seek out those who will share their food with you or who might take you out on the land to pick berries, or even hunt or fish here. These organizations believe in you. You learn there are places to go and people who will take you and teach you about this area and what the land can offer you here. You’re directed to other resources on campus, like the Camai room. You’re not alone. There are even a few professors on campus who are like you, who know how you feel, who speak your language.

Sort of like that moose who wasn’t actually invisible, there are places to go and people who will help, but you have to be able to see them or find them with a little assistance. If you do, then you’ll have a place where people might call you by one of your three names. Where they will recognize you as a real human being. Where you’ll feel community, something similar to what you feel in the village, and you’ll stay until you graduate, or even if you don’t on your first attempt, you’ll return some day and you will finish.

One or more of your professors won’t care or care to understand that you needed to go home. You might not even tell your instructors, you never had to in high school everyone just knew. Family and community matters over school, that’s how it was done back home. Plus, going home will bring with it a quick connection back to your family, your food, your culture, and a sense that you matter. You might just stay home and never return to college and just become another statistic, a piece of data and no one at UAA will know your three names.

*****

The next section of our report tells another important story -- how Native students at UAA and across the nation are faring in college.
National and Local Data on Native Student Preparation and Success

In Fall 2018, 1,508 Alaska Native/American Indian (AN/AI) undergraduate students were enrolled at the University of Alaska Anchorage, representing about 10% of the total undergraduate student body. About 1 in 2 of these students (54%) were seeking a bachelor’s degree, about 1 in 3 (34%) were seeking an Associate’s degree, and 1 in 5 entered as non-degree-seeking (20%). An additional 64 AN/AI students were seeking a graduate degree, about 7.3% of all graduate students at UAA. Alaska Native students are most likely to complete degrees in the following areas: General Program, Nursing, Nursing Science, Accounting and Human Services.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2019), 41% of 18-24 year olds in the United States (US) were enrolled in college in 2016. The rate of higher education participation for young adults who are Alaska Native or American Indian (19%), however, is the lowest in the nation; young adults who identified as Asian (58%), White (42%), two or more races (42%), Hispanic (39%), and Black (36%) attend college at much higher rates. The college participation rate for Pacific Islanders was slightly higher than for AN/AI students (21%)\(^1\).

Native students are also the least likely racial/ethnic group in the US to be retained past the first year of college\(^2\,3\,4\). This is also true at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA). The table below shows the first-year retention rate (percentage of students who return from first fall to second fall) at four-year public institutions in the US and at UAA for the 2017 cohort. Nationwide, 56% of Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) students at four-year public institutions are retained after their first year of college; at UAA the retention rate for AN/AI students is 42.7%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial/Ethnic group</th>
<th>2017 Cohort Overall</th>
<th>US Four-Year Public Institutions(^5)</th>
<th>University of Alaska Anchorage(^6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>78.5%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native/American Indian</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) UAA NWCCU March 2020 Ad Hoc Report

\(^2\) Appendix I: Chancellor’s Task Force on Alaska Native Student Success: Final Report
Graduation rates for AN/AI students are also consistently lower than for other racial/ethnic groups in the US and degree completion for Native males is significantly lower than for Native females\(^1\). These same patterns can be seen in graduation rates for AN/AI students at UAA. The table below shows the six-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time bachelor’s degree-seeking students entering in 2010 at four-year, public, open admissions institutions in the US by student race/ethnicity. The UAA rates for the same cohort also appear in the table. As shown below, only about 15% of AN/AI students who begin a bachelor’s degree program at UAA or other open-admissions, public universities across the US graduate within six years. The rate for Native males at open admissions institutions in the US (12.5%) is about 25% lower than it is for Native females (16.5%). At UAA, the gender difference is more pronounced, where the six-year graduation rate for Native males seeking a bachelor’s degree (8.8%) is less than half the rate for Native females (19.8%).

### Six-year Graduation Rate for First-time, Full-time Bachelor’s Degree-Seeking Students by Race/Ethnicity, 2010 Cohort at US Open admissions Public Four-Year Institutions and at UAA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Cohort</th>
<th>US Open admissions Public Four-year Institutions(^2)</th>
<th>University of Alaska Anchorage(^6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic group</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native/American Indian</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

College readiness or preparation is typically measured by the percentage of students who place into college-level math and writing courses at the institution. At UAA, writing readiness for most degree programs is measured by the percentage of first-time freshman who place into WRTG A111: Writing Across Contexts. For mathematics, college readiness is dependent on degree program. For most baccalaureate programs, a course in college algebra (MATH A121 College Algebra for Managerial and Social Sciences or MATH A151 College Algebra for Calculus) or Elementary Statistics (STAT A200) is the minimum required level of quantitative skills. For some baccalaureate programs and associate programs, however, a lower level of mathematics is required, generally placement into MATH A104: Technical Mathematics, MATH A105: Intermediate Algebra, or MATH A115: The Art of Mathematics.

The table below displays writing and math preparation for the Fall 2018 cohort of UAA first-time students. Overall, 46% of first-time freshman placed into WRTG A111 in Fall 2018; the rate for AN/AI students was 34%. The table also displays the percentage of first-time freshman at various...
levels of math readiness. In Fall 2018, 31% of first-time freshman placed into MATH A121, MATH A151, STAT A200 or higher, the minimum math required for most bachelor’s degree programs. Nineteen percent of AN/AI students placed at this level of math readiness.

### Fall 2018 Writing and Math Readiness for First-Time Freshman by Race/Ethnicity at UAA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial/ethnic Group</th>
<th>Percent Writing GER-Ready (WRTG A111)</th>
<th>Percent Math GER Ready (MATH A121, A151, STAT A200)</th>
<th>Percent Math Underprepared (MATH A104, A105, A115)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native/American Indian</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These stories are begging us to intervene. Indigenous students across the nation and at UAA are less likely to enter college than any other group, enter less prepared academically, drop out at alarming rates, and face great odds if they are to graduate. Native men are at higher risk than women.

### Current State Analysis

The task force convened a Current State Analysis subcommittee to identify programs across UAA that currently serve Alaska Native students and determine a key set of variables to be gathered about each of the programs. Programs were identified three ways: (1) they were listed on the UAA Alaska Natives webpage, (2) they were identified in a previous exercise conducted by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Alaska Natives & Diversity, and (3) they were identified by task force members. The set of variables gathered about each program include:

- The program name and location
- How long the program has existed
- The number of students served in 2018-19 and the percent who were Alaska Native
- Up to 5 major programmatic elements
- The funding source(s), annual budget, number of staff, staff-to-student ratio, and cost per student
- Up to 5 metrics for success, including current data
Current UAA programs on all of our campuses are providing an extensive array of programming to approximately 500 Alaska Native students each year including: academic support and preparation (e.g., pre-college academic engagement, tutoring, advising, peer mentoring, job shadowing, research support), financial resources (e.g., scholarships, research and service project grants, lab equipment, housing assistance), and social-cultural programming (e.g., community outreach, transition and onboarding support, cultural events, connections to Elders, clubs). Alaska Native students interested in careers in Engineering, Math, Natural Sciences, Nursing, Health Sciences, Business, and Psychology have access to programs aimed at helping them succeed in their fields. All UAA students also have the opportunity to learn about Alaska Native cultures, languages, indigenous lands, and rich history through academic courses, minor programs, campus signage, spaces, art, and acknowledgments. That said, we know a large portion of our Alaska Native students are not thriving and are likely not connected in intentional ways to the existing programs and services. We must make sure that all Alaska Native students are given opportunities to take advantage of the existing programs on our campuses and create opportunities where none currently exist.

A summary of each program reviewed can be found Appendix A, and at the end of the next section we evaluate UAA programs according to which currently employ the best practices identified in our review below (see matrix linked or on page 15-17 below).

**Best Practices for Alaska Native Student Success**

A Best Practices subcommittee reviewed over 25 publications focusing on various best practices used in multiple university contexts, primarily focused on US institutions and some international institutions. We identified two US Research I universities that systematically engaged in best practices that demonstrated improved overall institutional outcomes: Cornell University and University of Hawaii at Mānoa. Their data and publications were reviewed and the current Directors were interviewed. While neither of these institutions are close to us as peer institutions, their widely publicized, overarching institutional commitment and cohesive approach is instructive.

**Overview of Best Practices at US Institutions**

**Identification of Barriers**

Based upon our review of multiple publications the Best Practices subcommittee first identified the apparent barriers Indigenous students encounter when entering higher education. A list of barriers, as identified by the subcommittee, are as follows:

- Financial need, financial barriers
• Lack of knowledge about how higher education works
• Rural (and some urban) schools not adequately preparing students for college level work
• Bias, racism
• Sense of belonging, homesickness
• Difficult transition from small villages (rural areas) to large urban settings
• Indigenous faculty and staff not at parity (few role models or people to turn to with similar experiences)
• Little opportunity to learn from/work with Indigenous faculty or about their own histories and place in the community
• Invisibility (lumped with other minorities) and hypervisibility
• Lack of validation of their cultural strengths
• Few visible signs the university recognizes their location on Indigenous land
• Staff not trained in cultural competence for working with Indigenous students
• University students, staff, faculty not educated in the area’s local context as it pertains to Indigenous histories, experiences, etc.

** Please note any similarities/differences Indigenous students experience as compared to other minorities/economically/disadvantaged/first generation students.

Identification of Best Practices

The subcommittee identified the following best practices most commonly employed to improve Native/Indigenous student retention and graduation at universities around the US.

This list includes best practices that positively impact all students:
• Peer-to-peer assistance, including advising and mentoring, study groups, living/learning communities, cohort/co-enrollment, weekly meetings
• Faculty mentoring including engagement with faculty research, co-presentations, co-publications, internships, service learning, career visioning, and informal meal sharing
• Financial assistance and workshops for scholarships, internships, and employment
• Bridge programs and tutoring
• Access to affordable family housing and childcare
• Opportunities for students to maintain connections to home/family; Connections to local resources; Service learning with students’ communities (opportunities to “give back”)

This list includes additional factors positively impacting Indigenous student success:
• Culturally responsive teaching and curricula; Indigenous knowledge embedded and highlighted in the university; Training/workshops for non-Indigenous faculty and staff
• Dedicated community space reflective of AN/AI cultures (Indigenized); Elders, community leaders, and faculty – regular and consistent presence in these spaces
• Leadership consistently acknowledging that the university rests on Indigenous land
• University reflects Indigenous presence in signage, art, languages, and spaces
Cornell University and University of Hawaii at Mānoa

Cornell University and University of Hawaii at Mānoa (UH Mānoa) are similar in that their institutional strategy to improve Indigenous student success is easy to locate on their websites. Both institutions have large and inviting dedicated spaces. Both institutions have formalized, strong faculty/student and peer mentoring. These include opportunities for advising, research, community engagement, internships, as well as informal unstructured time.

Cornell’s American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program (AIISP) and Akwe:kon was the first residential space for American Indians (AI) in the nation. Serving 300 students per year, the AIISP indicates its retention rate for Native students is “…among the highest in the country.” The house is a residential living/learning community, which all Cornell faculty, students, staff, and students are welcome to join. Cornell’s space was designed specifically for AI students, yet its residents are a mix of both AI and non-tribal students. It provides a family-like atmosphere where residents share common interests in learning about past and contemporary American Indian issues. It also serves as a Community Center where the local communities are invited to join in workshops and social activities. The four-year graduation rate for American Indian students at Cornell has increased over time, from 50% for the 1990 cohort to 64% for the 2012 cohort; in 2016, the five-year graduation rate for American Indians was 91% (see Appendix B and Appendix C for data and narrative on Cornell’s program). Cornell does not provide a rigorous accountability process and we did identify problems in their data collection strategy.

University of Hawaii at Mānoa was awarded a Title III “Strengthening Institutions” grant to expand its current Native Hawaiian student serving spaces to build a “Hawaiian Place of Learning.” The grant provided for campus renovations to current spaces, including labs, and classrooms, and enhancing the Native Hawaiian Student Serving areas. UH Mānoa’s strategy was developed as part of a system-wide initiative to increase “the number of educated citizens within the state… [and to] support increased participation and completion, particularly for Native Hawaiians and students from underserved populations and regions.”

UH Mānoa’s accountability process includes setting goals and using metrics. The University of Hawaii system publishes scorecards for each campus (Hawai’i Graduation Initiative HGI) using disaggregated data to track specific populations. Approximately 17.8% of UH Mānoa students are Native Hawaiian. In 2018, there were a total 12,968 undergraduate students and approximately 2300 of these students were Native Hawaiian. The first-year (75.7%) and second-year (67.3%) retention rates for Native Hawaiian students in 2015 at UH Mānoa were significantly higher than for White, Hispanic, Native, and African American students. Between 2010 and 2018 the four-year graduation rate for Native Hawaiian students at UH Mānoa tripled, increasing from 10.3% to 32.3%. Increases in graduation rates are attributed to an array of student support programs, most of which are offered through Native Hawaiian Student
Services Appendix B and C contain data and narrative on UH Mānoa’s program and outcomes.

**Common Themes in Both Institutions**
- Institutions own their commitment to Native student success and widely publicize their approach and success.
- Intentionality is a key theme: a strong website presence details the institutional commitment.
- Multi-pronged strategies engaged in a cohesive fashion.
- Native students and their cultures are promoted as an asset.
- Significant faculty/student engagement and faculty leadership.
- Accountability systems and metrics are important.
- Easy access to externally verifiable data important.

**Where Best Practices are Being Employed by UAA Alaska Native Serving Programs**

The matrix here shows which UAA Alaska Native Serving Programs incorporate the best practices identified in the literature review above. There is no doubt that UAA programs are incorporating all of the best practices identified. Only a few of the programs (ANSEP, RRANN, NSS), however, utilize all or most of the best practices, and we know that these programs are reaching only about a third of our Alaska Native students each year. It is imperative that UAA adopt an Alaska Native Student Success strategy that focuses on bringing practices proven to improve retention, persistence, and graduation rates to all of our Alaska Native students throughout their time on one of our campuses.
## Appendix I: Chancellor's Task Force on Alaska Native Student Success: Final Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UAA Program</th>
<th># UAA students served in 2018</th>
<th>Academic Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peer-to-peer assistance, support, networking mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native Science &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native Community Advancement in Psychology</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment &amp; Retention of Alaska Natives in Nursing</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Student Services</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Early Transition</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alaska Native Business Management Minor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alaska Native Studies Council</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alaska Native Courses/GER</td>
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<td>Alaska Native Studies Program</td>
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<td>Della Keats</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mat-su College</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>
## Appendix I: Chancellor’s Task Force on Alaska Native Student Success: Final Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UAA Program</th>
<th># UAA students served in 2018</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Financial support (e.g., scholarships, equipment, research and service grants)</th>
<th>Financial advising, counseling, internship, practicum, employment assistance</th>
<th>Access to affordable housing and childcare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native Science &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native Community Advancement in Psychology</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment &amp; Retention of Alaska Natives in Nursing</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Native Student Services</td>
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<td>Alaska Native Studies Program</td>
<td>407*</td>
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<td>Residence Life Programs</td>
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<td>Mat-su College</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>UAA Program</td>
<td># UAA students served in 2018</td>
<td>Social-Cultural</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Culturally responsive advising and transition support</td>
<td>Culturally responsive teaching and curricula</td>
<td>Dedicated space and gatherings reflective of culture</td>
<td>Consistent presence of Elders, community leaders, faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alaska Native Science &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
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* Number is for total number of students enrolled/served in program. This number is not indicative of how many students in this program are Alaska Native. Fall18 - 193; Spring18 - 183; Summer18 - 31.
Recommended High Impact Interventions/Actions

We were asked to identify several high impact practices UAA could implement quickly to make a difference in Alaska Native student success.

1. Acknowledgment of UAA’s Place on Indigenous Lands.

We recommend that UAA add on the main page of the Anchorage campus website (and the other campus locations should do this as well for the cultural group whose land they are on) an acknowledgement to the Dena’ina Athabascan people on behalf of all UAA faculty, staff, and students thanking them for being on their cultural land, such as: The University of Alaska Anchorage would like to acknowledge and thank the Dena’ina Athabascan people for allowing us to be on their land. We also encourage UAA faculty to add a similar acknowledgment and thanks in their syllabi.

2. Pre-College Academic and Social Engagement Programs.

As indicated in our current state analysis, the university is not well-prepared for the many Alaska Native students who arrive and do not test into college level courses. To begin combating these dire statistics, the task force recommends that whatever institutional plan is adopted include a K-12 strategy for encouraging our Alaska Native students to participate in the pre-college programs provided at UAA. There are currently several: ANSEP Middle School Academy, ANSEP Acceleration Academy, ANSEP Summer Bridge, Della Keats Health Sciences Summer Program, and Middle College. Pre-college engagement inspires students to attend college, consider various career paths, and encourages them to arrive prepared for college. Students have reported that participating in these pre-college programs introduces them to the university and helps them feel welcome on campus.

This echoes a recommended solution cited in the Diversity and Inclusion Action plan: “Develop an outreach program that begins in middle school and continues through high school. This program should be educational in nature and build rapport with the students and the school district employee. A bridging program should supplement the outreach program. The bridging program should bring high school students to the UAA campus for instruction on college readiness and develop the student’s knowledge and confidence on the possibility of attending college. The bridging program should provide courses in English, math and college readiness.”

\[14\]
We also recommend that any strategy developed includes a way to better connect UAA pre-college programs with Alaska Native students in the Anchorage School District and other Alaska Native communities, and to encourage student participation in these programs, through links on websites, literature in their offices, and reaching out to schools via email and through career counselors.

Possible strategies might also include hosting pre-college fairs on the UAA campus (during the State 1A and 2A basketball and Native Youth Olympics tournaments and the AFN Elders & Youth Conference when many Alaska Native students and parents are at UAA). It is an opportune moment to gather UAA’s pre-college programs, Alaska Native students, and Alaska Native parents in one location to encourage student participation in these programs.

Formalize an Alaska Native pre-college program to encourage Alaska Native students to consider UAA. This program could offer cultural activities conducted by our Alaska Native Studies department, tours of the campus, practice tests for ACT, ALEKS or Accuplacer, scholarship writing workshops, and financial literacy courses.


Alaska Native students need to connect to each other in order to remain and succeed on the campus. It is vital that Alaska Native students are connected to each other so they can help one another navigate the urban campus setting. A cohort model including co-enrollment in several of the same classes is a proven success strategy for all students and this model should be carefully examined for possible implementation for all newly arriving Alaska Native students.

4. Living-Learning Communities.

Living-learning communities help Indigenous students be retained and succeed in college. These communities work to bring students, elders, faculty, community leaders, and industry leaders into one space.

a. It is recommended that UAA explore to what extent departments/colleges/schools might usefully initiate living-learning communities where ones do not currently exist. For example, the College of Health does not have an Alaska Native support program that supports non-nursing students.

b. Living-learning communities for non-degree seeking Alaska Native students might be a good option as they transition to degree-seeking programs. Alaska Native students could be informed more strategically about the Alaska Native living-learning communities already in place on the campus, such as ANSEP and RRANN.
Conclusion

UAA must embrace our Alaska Native students long before they arrive on campus, helping them to arrive prepared -- both academically and socially. We must welcome them to a campus that values their cultures, connect them with peers and faculty to mentor them, provide them with culturally-relevant supports, and help them until they cross the finish line, no matter how long that takes. This report is a first step in that direction. The institution now needs to put in place a formal body tasked with oversight of Alaska Native student success and begin to create a holistic, coordinated student success program that meets the needs of all of our Alaska Native students.

The task force would like to end with two stories. The following are real accounts of Alaska Native students from rural Alaska. One echoes the struggles illustrated in the introduction, while the second demonstrates how a program, such as ANSEP, can help to alleviate many of the barriers our students face.

**Devan Massin, Wrangell Alaska - Bachelor of Science Electrical Engineering, minors in Mathematics and Physics Fall 2018**

I'm 1/4 Aleut, my Grandmother's family was forcibly removed from her home in St. Paul Island to Southeast during the Aleut evacuations of World War 2. After the evacuations were over, my grandmother’s family decided to stay in Southeast. I grew up in Wrangell Alaska and went to Wrangell High School. I dropped out of high school at the start of my junior year and spent a year doing nothing until I moved to Ketchikan and went to school there for a few months, but eventually dropped out again. After another year I decided to get my GED and go to college at UAA, where I struggled with my school until I found ANSEP. ANSEP helped me go from struggling with basic calculus to graduating with a degree in electrical engineering and getting admitted to a graduate program in applied physics at Columbia University.

**Ray Daniel, Bethel Alaska - Freshman in Civil Engineering**

The Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) started helping me prepare for my first semester in college when I was just a middle school student, through the ANSEP Middle School Academy. The Middle School Academy introduced me to what the UAA campus was like, how large it was and how it was to live on campus. I then joined the ANSEP Acceleration Academy when I was in high school. Acceleration Academy allowed me see what the workload and expectations for a college course was like. I also began to understand the importance of how to manage my time for a college class and what to do to pass college classes. Now as a first time freshman in my first year of college, I am comfortable because I know where all the buildings are, I know what the workloads are like for each class and I have a cohort of friends that I
consider as close as family. I am also comfortable because of the support that ANSEP students and staff provide us through the ANSEP University Success component. ANSEP students and staff are able to help whether it's from homework through the weekly recitations, advice on which class/professor to take because other ANSEP students are in those same classes or internships to advance my professional career during our Weekly Meetings. I am far more prepared than my friends who did not participate in ANSEP in middle and high school. Now those friends come to me for advice on all of the things I have learned through ANSEP.
Appendix

APPENDIX A – UAA Programs Serving Alaska Native Students
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CKzGhn_oyrqtwKxG5Z-SneK6C2oT_QGYnLU0DALUll8/edit?usp=sharing

APPENDIX B – Programs Reviewed
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QFuDfsJWhr13W77DkJlm173r4cfhE-XQj5lJJaFJE/edit?usp=sharing

APPENDIX C – Additional Data
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1licl8f9M3uxEgwlGKSOrsCdq2plefwgrm-9l65oXoc/edit?usp=sharinghttps://docs.google.com/document/d/1licl8f9M3uxEgwlGKSOrsCdq2plefwgrm-9l65oXoc/edit?usp=sharing
References


2 Home Away From Home: Native American Student’s Sense of Belonging During Their First Year of College https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00221546.2016.1257322

3 American Indian/Alaska Native College Student Retention Strategies http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.823.3348&rep=rep1&type=pdf

4 National Student Clearinghouse https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport14/

5 National Student Clearinghouse https://nscresearchcenter.org/snapshotreport33-first-year-persistence-and-retention/

6 UAA Institutional Research Report https://anc-powerbireporting.uaa.alaska.edu/reports/powerbi/UAAC%20Reports/Students/Retention/UAAC%20Graduation%20Rate%20First-time%20Undergrad?rs:Embed=true

7 NCES https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17_326.10.asp

8 Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DAIP) p.85-89. https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/about/administration/office-of-the-chancellor/diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan/index.csh.html; Overcoming Barriers to Equity in Student Success (EAB, 2018); UAA Qualtrics Survey 2017

9 Overcoming Barriers to Equity in Student Success (EAB, 2018)


13 DAIP p. 85-89
14 “Creating Visibility and Healthy Learning Environments for Natives in Higher Education”


16 Ibid

17 Ibid

18 Ibid

19 Ibid

20 ANSEP Component Report (2015); “How Learning Communities Can Keep Higher Ed’s Most At-Risk Students on Track” (Chronical of Higher Education 2.27.2019); Overcoming Barriers to Equity in Student Success (EAB 2018); ANSEP Component 2015


23 “Home Away from Home; Native American Students’ Sense of Belonging during their First Year in College” Journal of Higher Education. 88:5, 785-807; Tachine, Cabrera, YellowBird;

24 Bringing Visibility to the Needs and Interests of Indigenous Students: Implications for Research, Policy, and Practice. Reyes and Shotton. ASHE-NITE Paper Series; Association for the Study of Higher Education and the National Institute for Transformation and Equity

25 Ibid; Bringing Visibility to the Needs and Interests of Indigenous Students: Implications for Research, Policy, and Practice. Reyes and Shotton. ASHE-NITE Paper Series; Association for the Study of Higher


27 Cornell University https://aiisp.cornell.edu/about-us/history/


Resources

Cornell “Graduation Rates for First Time Freshman by Cohort’s Entrance Year.” (IPEDS)

Cornell Retention https://aiisp.cornell.edu/student-life/retention/


Cornell Akwe:kon https://aiisp.cornell.edu/akwekon/history-akwekon/


Pulling Together Series. https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfoundations

“Leaders and Administrators”
“Teachers and Instructors”
“Foundations;”
“Curriculum Developers”
“Front Line Staff, and Advisors”

“Reconciliation within the Academy: Why is Indigenization so Difficult?” Michael Bopp, Lee Brown, Jonathan Robb. bopp brown robb_Reconciliation_within_the_Academy_Final.pdf


U of Hawaii Manoa https://apps.ksbe.edu/kscholars/2015/04/22/eia-summer-bridge-program-for-incoming-uh-manoa-students/


UAA NWCCU March 2020 Ad Hoc Report
NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (NWCCU)

Standard 1.D.2 Consistent with its mission and in the context of and in comparison with regional and national peer institutions, the institution establishes and shares widely a set of indicators for student achievement including, but not limited to, persistence, completion, retention, and post-graduation success. Such indicators of student achievement should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, and any other institutionally meaningful categories that may help promote student achievement and close barriers to academic excellence and success (equity gaps).

DRAFT UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE 2025 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT METRICS

Disaggregation  Race/Ethnicity, Age, Gender, Socio-Economic Status, First Generation, First-Time Full Time, First-Time Part Time, Transfer.

Peer Groups  Peer groups will include: Alaska Public Universities, Current UAA Peers, Large Public Masters, Associates, Public 4 Year, Large City Public 4 Year, Open Admission, Open Admission 4 year, WICHE Institutions, and Competitors. These peer groups will only be applied where there are national figures (Graduation and Retention Rates).

Metrics  

Graduation Rate  
- Baccalaureate (6 year, 8 year, 10 year).  
- Associate (3 year, 5 year, 7 year).  
- Additional metric: Junior Graduation Rate.

Graduate Program Time-to-Degree  
- Masters  
- PhD

Retention Rate: First to Second Fall

Persistence: First to Third Fall

Post-Graduation Success

Leading Indicators  Students complete Tier 1 GERS within first 30 credits

Course Pass Rates in first-year and gateway courses

Attempted vs completed “credits earned to credits attempted”