

Core Theme 2: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

UAA Mission Fulfillment Expectations

- UAA's excellence is recognized and supported by local and national agencies through grant awards

Summary of Feedback for Core Theme 2

Core Theme 2 Forum Demographics

1. Core Theme Indicator Assessment (CTIA) went to Faculty Senate Research and Creative Activity Committee and Research Council for initial review
2. Broad based participation balanced between:
 - a. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA) faculty and non-RSCA faculty.
 - b. Faculty, administrators, and staff.
 - c. Anchorage and community campuses.
3. Participant Statistics:
 - a. 63 Total (44 Anchorage; 7 Kenai River; 2 Kachemak Bay; 6 Mat-Su; 3 Kodiak; 1 Prince William Sound).
 - b. 45 Faculty; 8 Staff; 9 Administrators.

Summary of Major Points related to Mission Fulfillment:

1. **Observation:** Indicator 1 is aggregated.
Mission Fulfillment: Numerically demonstrates an increase in both submittals and dollars awarded consistent with discovery of new knowledge in general.
Next Steps: Retain; if expanded upon, do via other indicators. Disaggregating into subcategories might make data more robust and enhance usefulness.
2. **Observation:** Indicator 1 is narrow and does not include unfunded RSCA (books, papers, dramas, showings, performances, etc.).
Mission Fulfillment: Whilst Indicator 1 is consistent with our Mission and Core Theme Statements, it misses all RSCA not supported by grant, etc. funding. Indicator 1 does not address the dissemination of knowledge aspect of the mission.
Next Steps: Develop an expanded metric or surrogate to estimate level of unfunded RSCA; since this is likely to be significant, either revise the current indicators or provide and populate additional indicators; as a noted caution, avoid proliferation of indicators. Should investigate sources such as SCOPUS, Web of Knowledge, or other services that track publications and may be able to allow benchmarking with like institutions.
3. **Observation:** Whilst several large awards are noted within the second level analysis of Indicator 1, the ratio of small to large awards is unclear.
Mission Fulfillment: The above ratio could be argued both positively and otherwise as a predictor of future RSCA robustness.

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Next Steps: Is this ratio needed and, if so, how should it be computed and used? Using the median award level was suggested as an alternative.

4. **Observation:** Indicator 1 notes “Number of Grants Submitted” followed by “Awarded Grants, Contracts, & Sponsored Activities”, a larger category, making a direct comparison of wins to submittals difficult.

Next Steps: Clarify this metric otherwise the 33% win rate often quoted is not numerically obvious. Moreover, the text “Number of Grants Submitted” should read “Number of Proposals Submitted” in order to be consistent with the Mission and Core Theme Statements.

5. **Observation:** Indicator 2 is based on a very standard metric National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS).

Mission Fulfillment: Demonstrates a steady increase, both annually and over the past decade.

Next Steps: Retain; if expanded upon, do via other indicators.

6. **Observation:** Current indicators do not measure the impact of RSCA on students via supported graduate theses and dissertations, undergraduate research, classroom experiences, etc.

Mission Fulfillment: Students participating in the discovery and dissemination of knowledge clearly impacts student success.

Next Steps: Resolve: Under which Core Theme should such be addressed and how can a numerical metric be assembled (or should the metric be nonparametric)?

7. **Observation:** Indicators 1 and 2 are grant based and likely do not include gifts to Foundations for RSCA.

Mission Fulfillment: If such funding is significant, then a parallel dollars award path exists that falls within the spirit of this Core Theme but is not measured.

Next Steps: Determine if such monies are significant and, if so, how they should be included within the existing or future indicators.

8. **Observation:** The Indicators do not suggest levels of RSCA quality, depth, and value.

Mission Fulfillment: The Objective of Core Theme 2 is that RSCA should “Advance Knowledge” which implies measurement / proof of quality, etc. Citation tracking and analysis services, such as SCOPUS etc., help understand how the knowledge is used by others (impact).

Next Steps: Expand the indicators or second-level analysis.

Additional Note: A similar question related to “research investment” should be investigated.

9. **Observation:** Given the Mission Statement, how does RSCA contribute to the State’s needs?

Mission Fulfillment: Many of our awards are derived from, and contribute to, this Mission component but are not reflected herein. Unless we disaggregate data, it will be difficult to know whether funding aligns with State and local needs.

Next Steps: Perhaps an additional data line should be added to number of grants submitted.

Additional Note: The Mission Statement includes both “local and national agencies” but neither Indicator delineates such.

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Possible Ways to “Move the Needle”

1. Continue to expand both undergraduate and graduate research opportunities. Similarly expand interdisciplinary RSCA. Need to encourage collaboration across units and campuses.
2. Better recognition and promotion of RSCA faculty “rising stars.”
3. Increase and improve RSCA collaboration between Anchorage and the Community Campuses; likewise between UAA, UAF, and UAS.
4. Increase media visibility of UAA’s RSCA. Improve letting public know the value of research at UAA.
5. Focus on RSCA critical hires and consider cluster/coordinated hires.
6. Expand CAFE’s role in supporting RSCA efforts via workshops, fellows, etc.
7. Improve research support and administration; streamline research compliance; provide assistance with proposal writing and the monitoring of Request for Proposal announcements.
8. Can Alaska ways of knowing be brought into research approaches?