

**From the Outside Looking In  
Dr. Robert B. Stein  
September 30, 2016**

**The following generalizations are based on the consultant's observations and a review of materials submitted by participants during the Self-Study Kick-Off Session\***

- Kick-off attendees represented a good cross-section of the UAA community though student participation was minimal
- Participants demonstrated interest, enthusiasm, and openly shared perspectives about UAA's past and future
- UAA's location creates both strengths and challenges
- Beyond location, no single image emerged about UAA's distinctiveness
- Many of the desired characteristics of UAA graduates are common to all college graduates regardless of institution attended
- The vast list of desired characteristics generated provides a good foundation for further focus and prioritization
- Several items listed as evidence of student learning appear as proxies rather than direct measurements of student learning outcomes
- Whether participants believed that assessment of student learning should be used only for program improvement or also to ensure mastery of skills and knowledge of all UAA students was not clear
- Participants reported high involvement in collaborative endeavors
- Opportunities for greater collaboration were acknowledged especially beyond traditional boundaries
- Many of the UAA challenges identified implied a lack of connection between individuals, units, and campuses
- Some challenges identified suggested a level of anxiety about changes that are beyond an individual's control
- In general, participants were open and supportive of engaging existing and prospective employers of UAA graduates more fully in sharing information across a variety of domains
- Participants expressed a desire and willingness to be more engaged in working with students as their educational goals evolve

\* A special thanks to the self-study team, especially to Megan Carlson for categorizing with illustrations the vast materials submitted from the September 9<sup>th</sup> Kick-Off Session.