



INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

# 2022 MID-CYCLE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

*Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities*



**UNIVERSITY of ALASKA SOUTHEAST**

University of Alaska Southeast  
(UAS)

Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities  
(NWCCU)

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# INTRODUCTION

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) has accredited the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) since 1983. This accreditation includes the Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka campuses. Institutional accreditation is regularly reviewed and reaffirmed by the NWCCU. Based on a comprehensive [Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report](#) and site visit, UAS was [reaffirmed](#) in July 2019, with five commendations and three recommendations. The status of those recommendations is discussed later in this report.

UAS's current cycle falls under the new NWCCU Standards and Eligibility Requirements. UAS embraces these new standards and, in the academic year 2021, began aligning the [Strategic and Assessment Plan](#) with these new requirements. The self-reflective process that anchored the writing of this report has provided the opportunity to reflect on UAS' challenges, accreditation activities, and efforts to fulfill our mission and serve our students. The entire UAS community welcomes the insight and feedback from the mid-cycle evaluation team as we continue to forge a path forward.

# INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

The University of Alaska Southeast is a regional university serving Southeast Alaska through campuses in Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka. At UAS, one will commonly hear the phrase 'three campuses--one university,' reinforcing the concept that all campuses contribute meaningfully to the institution's mission. Southeast Alaska is also the ancestral home of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples, whose presence extends back thousands of years. UAS has maintained the status of a Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution, one of less than 100 institutions of higher education with an American Indian/Alaska Native student population of 10% or above.

All three campuses share in the university's decision-making processes and contribute to advancing student achievement and success. With no community colleges in Alaska, UAS has a broad purpose--providing 'community college,' baccalaureate, and graduate programs within a single institution. Programs are offered either in person or online to meet student needs across the entire state. UAS has long been recognized for offering programs of distinction in teacher education and educational leadership, marine biology, liberal arts, business, and public administration, health information management, and fisheries technology.

Over 2,000 students (1,454 FTE) attended UAS in fall 2021 ([UAS Enrollment Summary](#)). The majority are non-traditional students who attend part-time. Nearly 20 percent of UAS students are indigenous Alaskans. Most students come from Alaska, and nearly two out of every three are female. Over half of UAS students are over the age of 25, about 20% are first-generation, and about 20% are pell eligible. UAS's geographic location prompted the university to develop a robust array of online and distance courses and programs. Because of this, UAS efficiently transitioned students to distance learning when the COVID pandemic first began. In the past,

about 50% of courses were offered online. Today, with the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, about seventy percent of UAS courses are offered as e-Learning courses.

Since our 2019 accreditation visit, we have experienced the threat of consolidation into another UA institution, the impacts of COVID-19 on university operations, and budget reductions through the Compact signed between Alaska's Governor Dunleavy, former UA President Johnson, and the Board of Regents (BOR). These issues have put a strain on resources and, we believe, contributed to declining enrollment.

In June 2020, the prior UA President abruptly canceled a national search to replace the retiring UAS Chancellor. Also, in June, Regents considered structural changes to the UA system, including merging community campuses into UAS and merging UAS into UAA or UAF. The meeting concluded with a motion that directed UA personnel to study the pros and cons of a structural option involving a merger of UAS into the University of Alaska Fairbanks. At their August 2020 meeting, under the direction of new UA President Pat Pitney, the BOR amended the motion to remove the directive to study the merger; however, Dr. Karen Carey was not appointed to the Chancellor's position until November 2020.

The Compact was an agreement between Governor Dunleavy and the University of Alaska for a multi-year compact that preserves \$110 million in state funding for the university for the fiscal year 2020, reducing UA's budget by \$25 million for the fiscal year that began July 1, 2019. UAS is in the final fiscal year of the Compact, and we anticipate State support to stabilize with no further reductions. Our funding efforts focus on increasing federal funding and grant support, including co-sponsored research. As described below, we are focused on increasing tuition through growth in student enrollment.

All higher education institutions have been grappling with the effects of COVID-19 since March 2020. When the pandemic first hit, we moved most of our courses online, and most staff and faculty began working remotely. We prepared for a fall 2020 semester by offering a higher than usual number of online classes and providing faculty with additional training to "level up" their online teaching expertise. Our Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching provides faculty support in online teaching, accessibility, active learning, assessment, trauma-informed teaching, and active learning.

While faculty have become adept at teaching online, we know that students struggle with the effects of COVID-19. In early 2020, UAS established a COVID relief fund using a combination of federal and institutional funds to support students who had COVID-19 related financial hardships. We developed a webpage - essentially a "one-stop" location for operations updates, resources (including the relief fund), and COVID-19 specific policy information. UAS adjusted our housing capacity to allow students to safely live on campus with ample room for quarantine and isolation and modified our dining services operations to feed those students in quarantine and isolation. We also adjusted classroom capacities, recreation facility services, student engagement, and club opportunities to maintain services essential to our students and give them safe environments.

In June 2021, the University of Alaska (UA) Board of Regents approved a reorganization of UA Schools of Education. At UAS, this reorganization resulted in the Alaska College of Education (created in July 2018) being eliminated and replaced with a School of Education. Led by a Director, the new School, which CAEP accredits, continues to offer undergraduate and graduate degrees, endorsements, and licensure.

Despite these obstacles, UAS perseveres. During fall 2021, UA system office personnel [conducted a survey](#) of nearly 7,500 Alaskans, including current students and alumni. Key takeaways include that 91% of respondents who identified UAS as their local UA university gave UAS an “overall approval” rating. Sixty-seven percent of respondents considered UAS very important to the State, and 90% of respondents rated high (50%) or moderate (40%) the value of obtaining a UAS degree.

All the issues described above have informed our thinking about the future of UAS. We continue to focus on student success through the lens of equity. We are committed to making our institutions a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive place for all students, staff, and faculty. Towards that effort, below are some of our current planning initiatives.

## Strategic Planning Processes at UAS

### Chancellor’s Cabinets and Committees

The [Chancellor’s Cabinets and Committees](#) anchor UAS's strategic planning framework. The Chancellor's Core Cabinet is designated as the forum for discussions and decisions on strategic planning and budgeting, enrollment management, student success, the regional Teaching and Learning Roundtable, and other issues. This group meets monthly and includes the UAS Executive Cabinet and leaders in the Schools of Arts & Sciences, Career & Technical Education, and Education, the Egan Library, community campuses in Ketchikan & Sitka, Development & Alumni, Facilities, and Governance leaders. This Cabinet provides general advice to leadership about implementing the [UAS Strategic and Assessment Plan](#), including mission, vision, values, and core objectives.

The Core Cabinet is also responsible for developing and maintaining the [UAS Strategic Enrollment Plan](#) to guide long-term, data-informed planning and implementation of marketing, recruitment, and retention efforts. The UAS Strategic Enrollment Plan is informed by enrollment management and academic perspectives, including representation from faculty governance. The Extended Core Cabinet meets at least once a semester with the Chancellor's Executive Cabinet. Extended Cabinet members, or a subset of members, are invited to additional Chancellor's Cabinet meetings determined by agenda topic(s).

Since the 2019 Year-Seven review, UAS has continued to focus on fulfilling its mission of student learning and student success detailed in the [UAS Strategic and Assessment Plan](#) (SAP). Beginning in fall 2020, the Chancellor’s Core Cabinet began reviewing the SAP to align with the NWCCU 2020 Standards. Initially, we embarked on a UAS-wide [mission revision](#)

[process](#). The UA Board of Regents approved the new mission during their February 2021 meeting.

In Fall 2021, we continued our analysis of the SAP by reviewing our current vision and values. This work resulted in a modest update to our vision statement and an affirmation that the current values still hold true. We opted to develop the core objectives described below rather than continue with core themes. Last October, Chancellor Carey presented the draft SAP elements at a town hall forum. This forum was recorded and shared along with a link to provide feedback. After reviewing participant feedback, we modified the core objectives to be more clear and concise.

## UAS Master Campus Plan

Consistent with UA BOR policy on campus master plans (P05.12.050), UAS is in the process of updating our [Campus Master Plan](#) for the three UAS campuses. This project will result in an updated Master Plan presented to the BOR at their June 2022 meeting. This work is being conducted by the Ad Hoc Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC). The Committee represents the interests and concerns of institutional stakeholders and shall incorporate those interests and concerns into recommendations to the Chancellor during the master plan development process.

## Ongoing Commitment to Promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Cultural Safety

### Alaska Native Success Initiative

The [Alaska Native Success Initiative](#) (ANSI) is a five-year strategic plan that sets system-wide priorities and specific goals at the UA system level and at UAS. This plan is a collaborative effort by university leadership, faculty, students, staff, and Alaska Native leaders and was approved by the BOR in November 2021. We deeply appreciate the dedication and contributions of the Alaska Native leaders who joined us in this effort. UAS' institutional effectiveness office provided [Alaska Native student success data](#) to inform the committee's work. ANSI priorities include:

1. Attracting and Retaining Alaska Native Students;
2. Attracting and Retaining Alaska Native Faculty and Staff; and
3. Institutional change, including vision, leadership, and messaging

UAS is in the process of creating a position focused on Alaska Native student retention and providing unique support and tailored interventions and resources. This position will provide mentorship and advising to Alaska Native students, with the goal of Alaska Native student success.

## Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Alaska Native Education

UAS values associated with the mission highlight the special importance of the histories, cultures, languages, and arts reflected in the Alaska Native heritage, and to promote cultural safety and equity on our campuses. The [UAS Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Alaska Native Education](#) (CACANE) advises UAS leadership about fulfilling this mission and acting on these values. The CACANE provides written recommendations to the Chancellor and executive leadership annually and provides advice in the following areas:

- Supporting and improving Alaska Native student recruitment, retention, and program completion;
- Developing meaningful partnerships with tribes, Native corporations and non-profits, and other entities that share similar goals in fostering Alaska Native education;
- Advancing respectful recognition of Alaska Native heritage;
- Promoting and enhancing academic programs, pathways to student success, and student support services in the context of its mission, vision, and values; and
- Training and educating UAS faculty, staff, and administration on issues unique to Alaska Native heritage and history, and equity.

## Chancellor's Committee on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Cultural Safety

The [Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Cultural Safety](#) (DEI&CS) was established by the Chancellor to advance UAS' diversity goals and strategies and to champion diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural safety efforts. These efforts strengthen the professional, intellectual, and cultural experience of all members of the UAS community. Committee members serve as DEI&CS ambassadors for faculty, staff and students and facilitators of campus diversity-related news. The committee also produces information that is helpful to the University leadership for decision-making and discusses timely topics that support the committee's charge. The committee members meet regularly throughout the year.

The goals of the DEI&CS committee are to:

- Intentionally foster and sustain a welcoming campus environment based on the principles of equity and inclusion to create an environment that is respectful of differences and promotes the safety and security of all people;
- Recruit, employ, and retain a diverse faculty;
- Recruit and retain a diverse workforce and ensure that UAS' staff profile reflects the diversity of Southeast Alaska demographics;
- Prepare UAS students to lead and manage in a diverse and changing society by incorporating diversity and inclusion in significant ways in teaching, learning, and research; and
- Build upon existing partnerships and create new partnerships that enhance the University's commitment to diversity.



# MISSION FULFILLMENT

## Updating the UAS Mission Statement

UAS strives to fulfill its mission of student learning and student success. We developed our last mission statement over ten years ago, and we needed to ask ourselves, “Does it accurately reflect who we are?” Not everyone saw themselves or their programs in the prior mission. It is essential that our mission statement accurately reflect who we are, what we do, and who we serve. Further, we sought to create a mission that places diversity, equity, and inclusion at the forefront of our planning and assessment to close equity gaps. As indicated above, we underwent an inclusive [mission revision process](#) during the 2021 academic year.

### *UAS Mission*

*The University of Alaska Southeast is a student-centered university that provides instruction in liberal arts, professional, and technical fields. On the homelands of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples, we serve the coastal environments, cultures, economies, and communities of Alaska, through interdisciplinary education, workforce development, and scholarship, research, and creative activity.*

After BOR’s approval of the mission, we modified our values and affirmed our vision. Next, we designed our [core objectives](#) to demonstrate mission fulfillment and conform to the new NWCCU standards. Moreover, we selected metrics and goals within each core objective with an eye on closing equity gaps through disaggregated data. Below is an overview of our core objectives and related metrics and goals.

## Our Core Objectives

Core objectives and related goals and metrics encompass the entirety of UAS activity, from programs and services to facilities, administration and resource allocations. With the downturn in budget revenues and enrollments, student learning remains front and center as the mission’s core. During the current academic year, UAS has developed five core objectives.

### **Core Objective #1: Provide Access to Higher Education to all Students**

UAS strives to increase degree-seeking student enrollment. Overall enrollment has been declining over the past several years. We believe that budget reductions and merger discussions created uncertainty among students about enrolling at UAS. The current COVID-19 pandemic also led to an enrollment decrease. From FY20 to FY21, UAS degree-seeking enrollment declined 6%. UAS has a strategic enrollment plan in place, with recruitment, retention, and marketing efforts to assist in increasing enrollment. As of Fall 2021, new student registration is increasing, with continuing student enrollment declining. UAS has targeted 1% growth in Fall 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024, and 2% for Fall 2025 for a total 5% growth from Fall 2021.

In January 2022, Chancellor Carey convened a subset of the UAS Core Cabinet to update the [UAS Strategic Enrollment Plan](#). Participants in the Strategic Enrollment Task Force represent the three campuses, academics, student services, and administration. The committee will use the current Enrollment Plan, Hanover Research data, UAS Institutional Effectiveness data, and the ANSI recommendations. The Task Force will provide a draft plan to the UAS Executive Cabinet by May 15, 2022. This three-year strategic plan will include brief annual marketing, recruitment, and retention strategies for FY23.

For information about metrics related to core objective #1 see the [core objective summary](#).

### **Core Objective #2: Deliver academic excellence through instruction, scholarship, research, and creative expression**

Because of its small size and location, UAS is uniquely situated to excel at offering high quality, student-centered educational opportunities that build on its faculty and environmental assets. Students are provided relevant programs and services, ranging from community college-level to graduate level. Instruction, scholarship, and learning are conducted and supported by highly qualified faculty and staff through hiring, comprehensive performance review, professional development, and continuous improvement practices.

UAS faculty conduct research and creative activities across various disciplines to address the critical issues and the unique perspectives of Southeast Alaska and beyond. Research projects, mainly funded on external grants, are sometimes collaborative among UAS faculty and faculty from UAF, UAA, and universities and agencies from all over the country and world. Faculty researchers provide excellent opportunities for undergraduate students to be directly involved in the cutting-edge research that they bring in. Faculty-led innovative research also plays a fundamental part in enriching the academic experience and materials in the classrooms.

For information about metrics related to core objective #2, see the [core objective summary](#).

### **Core Objective #3: Increase Student Success**

A fundamental aspect of UAS' mission is the core objective of student success. It highlights the importance UAS places in providing its students access to the academic support they need to succeed, regardless of their physical location (campus-based or online) or whether they are pursuing workforce training, undergraduate or graduate degrees, or simply seeking opportunities for lifelong learning. Culturally and socioeconomically diverse students are provided ready access to educational opportunities and a safe environment.

UAS students are enabled to be as diverse as the state of Alaska. Our programs are designed for all types of students – high school, transfer, technical/trade, degree-seeking, professional development, and lifelong learners – and their unique educational goals. UAS provides

everything necessary for students to succeed: an environment conducive to learning, easy access to professors and resources, and opportunities to practice.

Currently, UAS' retention rate is 63%. Our retention goal is 68%. One tactic to achieve this retention was the creation of a [Retention Workgroup](#). Formed by Chancellor Carey in February 2022, the charge of the workgroup is to advance UAS enrollment growth by assessing current retention efforts and tools, and make recommendations for change, continuation, or elimination. The workgroup will also recommend new retention strategies that complement existing efforts. The workgroup will assist the UAS Core Cabinet with prioritizing retention strategies annually and support ad hoc teams associated with retention strategies to implement change.

Another tactic is the Retention through Intervention program, which aims to decrease DFW rates in gateway courses. Research shows students underperforming in these early courses are more likely to leave the institution. UAS reviewed its data and found this to be true with that information. Faculty teaching gateway courses send early alerts to advisors if a student is at risk of failing, so early intervention could assist the student. Faculty also provided students with a midterm grade to know their progress and, when necessary, reached out to faculty to develop strategies to get back on track. This project shows positive results of lower DFW rates among students in the courses that participated in the project. Additionally, more faculty began to offer early interventions and midterm grades in more classes than the identified gateway courses with the launch of this project.

For information about metrics related to core objective #3, see the [core objective summary](#).

#### **Core Objective #4: Be a Great Place to Work for All Employees**

UAS is committed to serving our employees to enhance their quality of life. Our dedicated staff and faculty work every day to advance our institutional goals to help our students succeed academically and prepare them to make a difference in their communities.

In 2021, UAS participated in the Great Colleges to Work For Survey to assess our efforts. The Great Colleges survey included a two-part assessment process: an institutional audit that captured demographics and workplace policies and a survey administered to faculty, administrators, and staff. The primary factor in deciding whether an institution received recognition was employee feedback.

A review of [topline reports from Great Colleges](#) shows us there is room for improvement in performance management, collaboration, and professional development. UAS plans to participate in the survey this academic year by supplementing our results with two new reports: Employee Comments Report and Race/Ethnicity Score Card. The UAS Core Cabinet will discuss survey results to develop strategies for improvement in the future.

As a part of the larger ANSI initiative, UAS focuses on hiring Alaska Native personnel, including two term faculty recently hired to teach Alaska Native Languages and Alaska Native Studies

and a grant coordinator with expertise in Alaska Native languages and studies. UAS is working to increase faculty and staff Alaska Native representation to match the student body and state (estimated 25%). As noted above, work done in the Chancellor's CACANE and DEI&CS committees will help ensure a safe and inclusive space for all.

For information about metrics related to core objective #4, see the [core objective summary](#).

### **Core Objective #5: Maintain Relevance through Productive Relationships within Southeast Alaska**

UAS provides programs and services that connect with local, state, national, and international entities on programs, events, services, and research that respond to the economic, environmental, social, and cultural needs and resources of Southeast Alaska. At the institutional level, people look to UAS as a driver for economic development and a venue for social and cultural activities. The advancement of Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures and languages is increasingly reflected in UAS programs. UAS has formal partnerships with the Sealaska Heritage Institute, the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, and the Ketchikan Indian Community as part of its community engagement.

Our community partnerships allow us to provide students with learning opportunities outside the conventional classroom. These internship opportunities create career pathways. For example, biology students frequently collaborate with the Sitka Sound Science Center, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Students seeking employment in the trades collaborate with local construction and mining companies, marine industry, and the U.S. Coast Guard. Business and Public Administration students benefit from proximity to local and state government through apprenticeships, and Education students collaborate with school districts statewide.

Sometimes, UAS formalizes these partnerships by entering into formal agreements with private outside organizations or governmental entities to provide joint or cooperative services to members of the public or in controlling relationships between the parties. All [Memorandums of Understanding or Agreements](#) are posted to the UAS website. A comprehensive list of [Advisory Councils and Committees](#) is also available to the public.

UAS students are encouraged to engage in research, creative activities, practicum, internships, and other experiential learning inside and outside the classroom. Many UAS programs incorporate experiential learning ("learning by doing," often outside the traditional classroom) as a matter of course, getting students out into the surrounding environment of Southeast Alaska. Other students are paid to work as lab and field research assistants for UAS faculty or local agencies and organizations. In addition, students can obtain university funding to pursue research and creative project ideas.

[Dual Enrollment](#) provides secondary students with opportunities to get a jump start on their college careers. UAS welcomes high school and homeschool students prepared for college-level work. Our dual enrollment policies are designed to allow access to courses in a manner



that supports student success. UAS advisors assist interested students with registering for classes or answering questions about dual enrollment.

For information about metrics related to core objective #5, see the [core objective summary](#).

## Continual Improvement to Evaluate Mission Fulfillment and Institutional Effectiveness

UAS has strategically placed self-assessment at the heart of its activities. Through this commitment to continuous self-reflection and improvement, UAS has developed a culture of assessment that guides decision-making institution-wide. An essential facet of UAS's assessment activities is assessing student achievement of pre-defined learning outcomes. The process starts with developing learning outcomes assessment plans for each academic program, followed by plan implementation, reporting, and ultimately looping back the insights gained from this process into program improvements.

### Five Year Program Reviews

[Five-Year program reviews](#), required by [Board of Regents policy](#), are an integral part of our practice to ensure mission fulfillment. Existing programs go through an extensive program review process concerning quality, efficiency, and contribution to mission and goals. These reviews focus on data-informed evidence of quality teaching and learning, graduation effectiveness, graduates' success in securing employment or advancing their educational goals, community engagement, adequacy of available resources, alignment with related programs at UAS and across UA, and program elements requiring improvement. Program review results are reported to the BOR annually. As noted above, a committee made up of Faculty, Institutional Effectiveness, and the Interim Provost has convened to revise the program review template to align with the Board of Regent policy and the NWCCU 2020 standards.

### Annual Program Assessments

An essential facet of UAS's assessment activities is the [annual program assessment](#) of pre-defined learning outcomes. The process starts with developing learning outcomes assessment plans for each academic program, followed by plan implementation, reporting, and ultimately looping back the insights gained from this process into program improvements. Comprehensive program assessment plans are required for all UAS certificate, associate, bachelor, and master's degree programs. Generally, the assessment centers on the combination of courses the students have taken to degree completion, not on individual courses. The assessment plan does not assess general education courses and developmental courses but is focused on the learning outcomes of an overall degree or certificate program. Program Assessment Plans and Annual Assessment Reports can be found on the [Assessment and Review Schedule](#) located on the provost website.

## General Education Learning Outcomes

In addition to the specific course level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), UAS has developed [General Education Learning Outcomes](#). The Provost's Assessment Committee (PAC) for General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) was formed in Fall 2016 to develop tools and a process to assess how UAS undergraduate students acquire the skills and knowledge of UAS General Education Requirement (GER) coursework. The committee has faculty members from Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka and represents all three schools and the four departments in the School of Arts & Sciences.

The UAS Faculty Senate and the Chancellor's Core Cabinet have endorsed the following GELOs:

1. **Effective Communication:** *Communicate thoughts and ideas effectively, orally and in writing.*
2. **Critical Thinking:** *Demonstrate comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas and/or theories, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion, conclusion, or solution.*
3. **Creative Thinking:** *Present creative works of expression, innovative approaches to tasks, or solutions to problems.*
4. **Empirical Reasoning:** *Articulate the scientific method and pose well-reasoned questions in the search for answers through data.*
5. **Environmental and Community Engagement:** *Explore Indigenous and global social perspectives with respect for diversity of people, different perspectives of resource sustainability, and human impact on the environment.*

GELO committee reports, Annual Program Assessment plans and reports, and the schedule of Five Year Program Reviews can be found on the [Provost's website](#).

In January 2022, the Interim Provost convened a group of faculty to review UAS's assessment programs, including PAC-GELO. This group is tasked with:

1. Revising the five-year program review template to align with the Board of Regent policy and the NWCCU 2020 standards;
2. Revising the annual program assessment report and identifying areas where these reports can scaffold with the five-year program review template; and
3. Clarify the work of PAC-GELO in relation to other assessment programs and develop ways to report the findings to all faculty.

## Student Success Program Evaluations

The division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) uses the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) to structure regular program reviews throughout student services. The standards for evaluation include "indispensable requirements

achievable by any and all programs of quality.” There are twelve standards that each program review addresses:

Mission	Human Resources
Program and Services	Collaboration and Communication
Student Learning, Development, and Success	Ethics, Law, and Policy
Assessment	Financial Resources
Access, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	Technology
Leadership, Management, and Supervision	Facilities and Infrastructure

The EMSA division will conduct two reviews of each service during the seven year accreditation cycle. The first review is underway and the second review will be completed by December 2025. Program review outcomes will be shared with division leadership, and each program/service will include a summary of recommendations for continuous improvement shared with division leadership accountable for advancement of recommendations.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Student achievement and attainment are central to the core objectives in the UAS Strategic and Assessment Plan. Through developing student learning assessment plans for the degree, program faculty determine how they will assess the mastery of program student learning outcomes. The [Office of Institutional Effectiveness](#) (IE) is the official source of information for UAS and is primarily responsible for institutional-level data collection, analysis, reporting, and presentation. The IE office has a dual mission to provide institutional effectiveness (IE), and institutional research (IR) functions at UAS. The IE Director works collaboratively with the statewide UA Office of IR and counterparts at UAA and UAF. The following will provide an overview of the data types available to the public and the campus community.

### Data Overview

#### External Data

The [IE website](#) contains publicly available data related to UAS and its peers. Of note, the UAS IE [Overview webpage](#) contains a [fast facts sheet](#) for basic information about UAS, and the Student Enrollment Data webpage contains an [Enrollment Summary](#) report. The Student Success webpage contains a [peer student success data](#) summary. However, the [External Reporting](#) webpage provides the majority of publicly available data. This includes the Common Data Set, recent IPEDS survey submissions and links to the external sites using IPEDS data

such as [College Navigator](#) and [College Scorecard](#). The [IPEDS Data Feedback Report](#) with peer comparisons is available here as well. Also available on the external reporting webpage are links to the State of Alaska [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\) Performance Details](#) for UAS and a direct link to the [University of Alaska Goals and Metrics](#) (in progress).

## Internal Data

Most of the data available from IE is internal dashboards to provide more detail and information to UA users. The IE office has spent the last 3 years collaborating with stakeholders across the university to identify the data needs of users and develop comprehensive automated dashboards that allow for self-service of basic institutional data. The links below provide a snapshot of what the dashboards look like and how they can be utilized.

The dashboards include the following:

- [Enrollment Data](#)
  - [Live Weekly Enrollment Reports](#): Displays the current applications, admitted students, and enrolled students for the upcoming, or current, term in comparison to the average of the last three years at the same point in time. This is also available at the program level for more in depth review of who is enrolling. Updated weekly as of Friday end of day.
  - [Enrollment by Major](#): Available for both beginning of term census date and end of term census date. Displays enrollment by primary major or all majors, minors and concentrations. Demographics such as student level, age, race/ethnicity, gender and origin at entry are included. Data shows five years of data by either a specific term or an entire fiscal year. Updated bi-annually.
  - Course Enrollment:
    - [Daily Enrollment](#) of the upcoming or current term is available for monitoring course capacity.
    - [Official Course Enrollment](#) displays enrollment at the individual course level, by subject area, and delivery method. Includes course counts, headcounts, student credit hours, and faculty counts. Updated bi-annually at the official end of term census date.
  - [Student Faculty Ratio](#) information is available for calculating teaching FTE at the course subject level, course level, or by specific program needs. Updated annually.
- [Student Success Data](#)
  - [Student Success Summary](#): Provides an overview as well as detailed information on persistence, retention, and completion rates based on 3 year averages. Current rates and historical rates are included and disaggregated by many variables including: degree seeking level, student type, full-time/part-time status, home campus, department, sex, race/ethnicity, age, origin at entry, pell status, and first generation status. Update annually at the end of the fiscal year.
  - [Course Pass Rates](#): DFW rates available by the individual course level and aggregated by campus, subject, delivery method, and department. Updated annually.



- [Awards and Degrees](#): Student degree counts by degree level and various demographics. Updated annually.

## UAS Peer Group Review

The UAS' [previous peer group](#) was developed in 2000 and updated in 2012. It utilized the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) automatic peer group from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Per IPEDS: "The NCES automatic comparison group for degree-granting institutions is based on control type, Carnegie Classification, and enrollment size". During the 2019 accreditation cycle, it became clear that the current UAS peer group may no longer make sense. When reviewing information about the peers to benchmark UAS, there were significant differences between the institutions and UAS. Additionally, when looking at the current IPEDS peer group for UAS, only one institution from the current peer group was still included (Eastern Oregon University). UAS staff and the accreditation review committee in 2019 believed it was time to review and update the peer group.

In 2021, the IE director conducted [a robust analysis](#) of the previous peer group and made recommendations for a [new peer group](#). This analysis utilized the most recent IPEDS automatic peer group, IPEDS data related to student demographics, success, and financial components, and the university missions to drive the process. The UAS Core Cabinet approved the new peer group recommendation during their February 2022 meeting. UAS has begun reviewing the peer data, including the [IPEDS Data Feedback Report](#) and additional [Student Success Metrics](#) to identify how we compare, and will continue to utilize this peer group for planning and decision making.

## Data in Action, Highlights since 2019

[Retention through Intervention](#): In connection with the NWCCU Retention Academy, UAS piloted a project to decrease DFW rates in gateway courses. We attended several presentations from the NWCCU conference related to underrepresented groups doing worse in gateway and entry-level courses than other students. Their research shows students underperforming in these early courses are more likely to leave the institution. With that information, UAS reviewed its data and found this to be the case. We created a Retention through Intervention pilot where faculty teaching gateway courses sent early alerts to advisors if a student was at risk for failing, so early intervention could assist the student. The project also had faculty provide students with a midterm grade to see how they were doing and meet with faculty to develop strategies to get back on track. This project showed positive results of lower DFW rates among students in the courses that participated in the project. Now, faculty are invited to participate every year. Additionally, more faculty began to offer early interventions and midterm grades in more classes than the identified gateway courses with the launch of this project.

*Hanover Research*: In the academic year 2021, UAS partnered with Hanover Research to conduct several strategic projects, expanding the work of the Institutional Effectiveness office. The first two projects focused on marketing and recruitment, providing the Creative Agency team with concrete information for expanding marketing-related initiatives into the Pacific

Northwest and within Alaska. The following projects focused on Financial Aid leveraging to understand better ways to use institutional funds to assist all students in attending UAS. Financial Aid has utilized these reports to modify the Financial Aid model.

*Student Success:* The metrics contained in the [core objective summaries](#) have been presented and reviewed across UAS in various ways. One particular area of focus has been student success. In the academic year 2020, IR presented a [comprehensive report](#) about retention and completion to the Core Cabinet. This led to university-wide discussions about areas of focus for retention efforts. Through these ongoing discussions, the Strategic Enrollment Task Force was re-charged and a Retention Workgroup was formed.

## PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT

As noted above, five-year program reviews, annual assessment reports, and PAC-GELO form the foundation of UAS' program assessment processes.

### Representative Examples of Programmatic Assessment

[Five-Year Program Reviews](#): These reviews are required by [UA BOR policy](#) and are guided by a [program review template](#). The [academic program review](#) process begins in September with Institutional Effectiveness providing the committee a data set that relates to the sections of the review template. The full program review timeline is located on the [Provost website](#). As mentioned earlier in this report, a committee has begun reviewing the current template to conform to the NWCCU 2020 standards.

#### [Example 1: AAS in Fisheries Technology, School of Career Education](#)

This program was reviewed during the academic year 2021. This example of a five-year program review includes reports from the program review committee, the Institutional Review Committee report, and the program review committee's response. Also included are the Sitka Campus Director's response and the Interim Provost's final recommendation to the Chancellor based on the program review process.

This example shows how the five-year program review improved the student pathway from an AAS to a BS degree. UAS faculty have been working with the UAF undergraduate fisheries program. Previously, an AAS student would have to attend an additional 3.5 years at the University of Alaska Fairbanks to receive a BS in Fisheries. Through updates to the 2009 articulation agreement, a UAS AAS fisheries student will now be able to transfer in and receive a BS degree in an additional 2.5 years. A similar pathway is planned with UAS biology programs.

Annual Program Assessments: All certificate, associate, bachelor, and master's degree programs have an annual [assessment plan](#), written by program faculty and reviewed by the dean and program faculty every year by October 31. Annual program assessment reports are due to the provost at the beginning of April for the previous academic year. The format for the [annual program assessment report format](#) was revised in 2017 and posted on the provost's website in 2018. Specifically, programs must now address how the data are collected for the student learning outcomes, the data actually collected for the prior year, evaluation of the data, and plans for improving student learning outcomes. Annual reports must include:

1. Program overview
2. Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
3. How the data are collected on the Program SLOs (rubrics, portfolios, etc.)
4. The data collected on the Program SLOs during the previous academic year
5. An evaluation of the data collected on the Program SLOs during the previous academic year
6. Future plans to improve student learning

[Example 2: BS Environmental Science / BS Environmental Resources, School of Arts and Sciences](#)

Program faculty updated their assessment plan during the academic year 2021. The most recent assessment report covers the academic year 2020. This example includes both the assessment plan and report. This example shows how the program's analysis led to a commitment to offer field-oriented courses in the spring and establish a UAS Program on the Environment.

## MOVING FORWARD

UAS continues to work towards its seven-year review by building upon the accomplishments to date. Our priority is to continue improving enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. Specifically, we have identified the following goals for the upcoming year:

1. The [Chancellor's Core Cabinet](#) and established workgroups and committees will refine our metrics, goals, and tactics towards achieving core objectives keeping in mind diversity, equity, and inclusion.
2. Complete the review of our assessment practices (GELO, annual program assessment, five-year program review) with an eye on alignment to the 2020 NWCCU standards and enhancing the data packets provided to faculty.
3. Focus on strategic enrollment management through the Strategic Enrollment Task Force and the Retention Workgroup to realize our enrollment targets.
4. Support efforts to attract and retain underrepresented faculty, staff, and students by encouraging a diverse curriculum and pedagogy to build a safe and inclusive space for all.

# ADDENDUM: Update on Prior Recommendations

In their 2019 reaffirmation letter, the NWCCU included three recommendations. Below are how we have addressed these recommendations.

1. Stabilize its administrative team and structure, as well as employ a sufficient number of qualified personnel, in order to fulfill its mission and achieve its strategic priorities.

The UAS Executive Cabinet is stable in structure and focuses on mission fulfillment. Members of the Executive Cabinet are considered the senior leadership at UAS. The Vice-Chancellors (two) and Associate Vice-Chancellor (one) have a long history with UAS in various positions and continue their service on this cabinet. Chancellor Richard Caulfield retired in June 2020, and Provost Dr. Karen Carey was appointed Interim Chancellor. In November 2020, Dr. Carey was named Chancellor. Dr. Carey has been with UAS since July 2016. Dr. Maren Haavig was appointed as Interim Vice Provost in July 2020. Shortly after Dr. Carey was appointed Chancellor, Dr. Haavig was named Interim Provost. Dr. Haavig has served UAS since August 2010 as both faculty and Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences. A search to fill the Provost position began in August 2021 and is expected to conclude in March 2022. The Office of Institutional Research is currently an office of one. As resources become available, we plan to add another individual to staff.

To cut down the number of meetings, the Chancellor created a Core Cabinet which encompasses people from across campuses, including deans and directors; and faculty, staff, and student representatives, to focus on strategic priorities. Previously we had a Chancellor's Cabinet and a Strategic Planning and Budgeting Advisory Committee, which have now been combined to make up the Chancellor's Core Cabinet.

2. Expand on the strong progress made in the analysis and use of disaggregated demographic and learning outcomes data in order to support the evaluation of mission fulfillment.

UAS has made significant progress in analyzing and disaggregation of data. Student and Program Learning Outcomes continue to be emphasized with all programs. The Executive Cabinet meets with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness on an as-needed basis to make decisions about disaggregating demographic data. Specifically, annual retention and completion data is now provided with data disaggregated by crucial focus areas at UAS. These reports are presented and discussed at the Executive Cabinet and Core Cabinet levels.

3. Revise and refine its objectives and indicators to better inform its future planning and decision-making.

To align with new NWCCU standards, UAS has adopted core objectives with related metrics and goals. Our new objectives and metrics aid in our decision-making about future planning, especially in student retention. Recently, we completed a review of peer institutions which has created a new list of peer institutions that are much more similar to UAS than the previous list.