UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

Mid-Cycle Evaluation | August 2014

UAF UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

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Table of Contents

PART I 3
Introduction 3
Mission Statement 3
Mission Core Themes 3
UAF Strategic Plan and UA's Shaping Alaska's Future 4
Alignment of the Core Themes 5
Assessment of Mission Fulfillment 6
Data Collection 11
PART II 13
EXAMPLE 1: ASSESSMENT OF ENGL 111X (Core Curriculum) 13
INDICATOR: Students achieve intended learning outcomes within their program. 13
EXAMPLE 2: RETENTION AND GRADUATION EFFORTS 14
INDICATOR: First-time degree-seeking baccalaureate students persist and graduate. 14
PART III 16
Preparing for Year Seven 16

PART I

Introduction

The University of Alaska Fairbanks offers educational programs from occupational endorsements to certificates, associate, bachelor's, master's, and PhD degrees. Program areas include vocational-technical fields, arts, humanities, sciences, and professions. Developmental preparation is also offered to help prepare students for postsecondary education. These diverse programs include 161 degrees and 29 certificates in 125 disciplines. This collection of programs is a result of student and employer demand, our history as Alaska's first university, our strength in research, and our geographic isolation. Total UAF enrollment for fall 2013 was 10,214 students. Eighty-four percent of all students came from Alaska. Among the University of Alaska's three universities, UAF had the largest proportion of full-time students (41 percent) and of graduate students (11 percent).

UAF is distinguished by its unique location. Alaska, with 572,000 square miles, represents 20 percent of the land mass of the rest of the states combined. It is twice the size of Texas, and is physically separated from the rest of the United States by about 2,000 miles. Fairbanks, located in the state's Interior, has a city population of about 32,000, with about 100,000 people in the Fairbanks North Star Borough. The nearest town with a population of 10,000 or more is 360 miles away by two-lane road or a one-hour flight. Travel to and from Fairbanks is typically by air because of the large distances between locations and because many towns, including those where several of the rural campuses are located, are not accessible by road or railroad.

UAF's student population is diverse with respect to ethnicity, age, economic status and proportion of part-time versus full-time students. Of the roughly 4,000 baccalaureate degree-seeking FTE students enrolled at UAF in fall 2013, 61 percent were low income or first generation, and 5 percent had a documented disability. Twenty-four percent of UAF baccalaureate students belong to an ethnic minority. Because 20 percent of UAF students are Alaska Native or American Indian, the US Department of Education has designated UAF a Title III-Part A eligible institution, with Alaska Native-serving components. The average age is 26, and 60 percent are under the age of 25. Fifty-nine percent of UAF students attend school part time, which is significantly higher than the national average for a four-year institution.

Mission Statement

The UA Board of Regents approved the following UAF mission statement on June 8, 2012, and it is contained in Regents' Policy (01.01.03):

> *The University of Alaska Fairbanks is a Land, Sea, and Space Grant university and an international center for research, education, and the arts, emphasizing the circumpolar North and its diverse peoples. UAF integrates teaching, research, and public service as it educates students for active citizenship and prepares them for lifelong learning and careers.*

The mission is guided by and consistent with the following UA System mission statement (approved on Oct. 6, 2000, and contained in Regents' Policy 10.01.01):

> *The University of Alaska inspires learning, and advances and disseminates knowledge through teaching, research, and public service, emphasizing the North and its diverse peoples.*

Mission Core Themes

UAF is distinctive in the UA System for its research-intensive mission; PhD programs; Land, Sea, and Space Grant status; statewide outreach through the Cooperative Extension Service and Marine Advisory Program; and service to rural and Alaska Native peoples of Interior, northern, and western Alaska.

Guided by and consistent with our mission, values, and vision, the following are UAF's core themes:

- Educate: Undergraduate and Graduate Students and Lifelong Learners
- Research: To Create and Disseminate New Knowledge, Insight, Technology, Artistic, and Scholarly Works
- Prepare: Alaska's Career, Technical, and Professional Workforce
- Connect: Alaska Native, Rural, and Urban Communities by Sharing Knowledge and Ways of Knowing
- Engage: Alaskans through Outreach for Community and Economic Development

As a state research university and Land, Sea, and Space Grant institution, UAF advances (Research) and disseminates (Educate, Research, Prepare, Connect, Engage) knowledge through teaching, research, and public service. Because of UAF's location in Interior Alaska, we have a strong commitment to maintain and further develop partnerships with Alaska Native and rural communities (Connect). The mission emphasis on Alaska, the circumpolar North, and their diverse peoples is represented in all our core themes except Educate. The Educate theme addresses our broad national and international instructional responsibility within which we strive for academic excellence and student success. Lifelong learning is addressed in both the Educate (for credit) and Engage (not for credit) themes and is evident in Connect as well. Thus, our core themes manifest the essential elements of UAF's mission and collectively encompass our mission. UAF aligns its research, educational, and public service activities to fulfill these essential elements of its mission through cooperation and collaboration among all its units.

The core themes, developed in 2010, were amended in 2012 under recommendation of the Year One Accreditation Steering Committee. They were reviewed and revised by the following groups, in order of review:

- Faculty, staff, students, administrators, and external advisory groups via a web survey
- Steering Committee
- Faculty Senate and Staff Council
- Chancellor's Cabinet
- Steering Committee
- Faculty Senate and Staff Council.
- Chancellor's Cabinet (approved April 2012)
- Board of Regents (approved June 2012)

The Year Three (now Mid-Cycle Evaluation) Accreditation Steering Committee revisited the core themes and found them to still be useful and relevant to UAF's mission and goals.

UAF Strategic Plan and UA's Shaping Alaska's Future

UAF began developing a new strategic plan in 2011. Led by a steering committee, subcommittees were formed according to the five core themes, with an additional subcommittee for resources and capacity. The plan states, "It became clear that many of the university's goals reach across more than one of our core themes, demonstrating the profound degree to which the mission is as integrated as it is complex." The plan set out seven goals with several strategies for each, and a link to at least one core theme for each strategy.

A draft was completed in 2012. Because of a parallel Strategic Directions Initiative being carried out by the UA Statewide System, the final approval of the draft was delayed to allow for any revisions that might be needed to conform to the UA System document. That document, now titled *Shaping Alaska's Future*, was approved by the UA Board of Regents in April 2014 and incorporated into Regents' Policy in June 2014. Review of the UAF Strategic Plan showed that it was congruent with *Shaping Alaska's Future*, and Chancellor Brian Rogers approved the UAF Strategic Plan in April 2014.

The UAF Strategic Plan lists the following goals, with the core themes that they address in parentheses:

- Goal 1: Educate students to be informed, responsible, and active citizens by incorporating real-world experiences and applications into the undergraduate curriculum. *(Educate, Research, Prepare, Engage)*
- Goal 2: Promote UAF as Alaska's premier research enterprise in partnership with state and federal agencies, industry, Alaska Native organizations and civic groups. *(Research, Connect, Engage)*
- Goal 3: Serve Alaska's diverse communities in ways that are increasingly more responsive and accessible and enhance the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of individuals and communities. *(Educate, Connect, Engage)*
- Goal 4: Improve assistance to students in making transitions across all phases of the education curriculum. *(Educate, Prepare, Connect)*
- Goal 5: Create or expand graduate programs to targeted areas of identified need and existing strengths. *(Educate, Research, Engage)*
- Goal 6: Enhance UAF's competitive advantage by attracting and keeping the best and brightest students, staff, and faculty. *(Educate, Research, Prepare)*
- Goal 7: Develop innovative approaches to managing University resources to support its mission and position it to meet the challenges of the future. *(addresses the sustainability of all core themes)*

Alignment of the Core Themes

UAF's core themes and strategic plan deliberately align with the UA System's *Shaping Alaska's Future* initiative, as seen in the table below. The five themes of *Shaping Alaska's Future* are:

- Student Achievement and Attainment
- Productive Partnerships with Alaska's Schools
- Productive Partnerships with Public Entities and Private Industries
- Research & Development and Scholarship to Enhance Alaska's Communities and Economic Growth
- Accountability to the People of Alaska

UAF CORE THEMES	UAF STRATEGIC PLAN	UA SHAPING ALASKA'S FUTURE
EDUCATE: Undergraduate and Graduate Students and Lifelong Learners RESEARCH: To Create and Disseminate New Knowledge, Insight, Technology, Artistic, and Scholarly Works PREPARE: Alaska's Career, Technical, and Professional Workforce CONNECT: Alaska Native, Rural, and Urban Communities by Sharing Knowledge and Ways of Knowing ENGAGE: Alaskans through Outreach for Community and Economic Development	Educate students to be informed, responsible, and active citizens by incorporating real-world experiences and applications into the undergraduate curriculum. Create or expand graduate programs to targeted areas of identified need and existing strengths. Enhance UAF's competitive advantage by attracting and keeping the best and brightest students, staff, and faculty Promote UAF as Alaska's premier research enterprise in partnership with state and federal agencies, industry, Alaska Native organizations and civic groups. Improve assistance to students in making transitions across all phases of the education curriculum. Serve Alaska's diverse communities in ways that are increasingly more responsive and accessible and enhance the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of individuals and communities. Develop innovative approaches to managing University resources to support its mission and position it to meet the challenges of the future.	Student Achievement and Attainment Research & Development and Scholarship to Enhance Alaska's Communities and Economic Growth Productive Partnerships with Alaska's Schools Productive Partnerships with Public Entities and Private Industries Accountability to the People of Alaska

Assessment of Mission Fulfillment

UAF is dedicated to maintaining high standards and continuously assessing mission fulfillment. The core themes are connected to our mission, vision, values, and strategic planning, as illustrated in the previous section. These connections provide the context for defining mission fulfillment using indicators of achievement for the objectives for each theme. The rubric on the following pages identifies for each core theme a subset of indicators of achievement and thresholds indicating when mission fulfillment is surpassed (Likert scale index 5), met (index 3), or below expectation (index 1).

UAF defines mission fulfillment for the institution as achieving an average index value of 3.0 or better for the indicators within each theme, and having not more than one indicator in each theme group rated 1 (below expectation).

Mission Fulfillment Rubric by Theme					
Likert Scale	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Theme	**Above Mission Expectation**		**Meets Mission Expectation**		**Below Mission Expectation**
Educate: Undergraduate and Graduate Students and Lifelong Learners	**1) Students achieve intended learning outcomes within their program.**				
	More than 95% of programs have direct evidence that students are achieving intended learning outcomes.		75 to 85% of programs have direct evidence that students are achieving intended learning outcomes.		Less than 50% of programs have direct evidence that students are achieving intended learning outcomes.
	2) Students perform similarly to peers on programmatic national exams.				
	Average student performance on all programmatic national examinations with at least 5 students assessed is above the 75th percentile.		Average student performance on all programmatic national examinations with at least 5 students assessed is between the 40th and 60th percentile.		Average student performance on some programmatic national examinations with at least 5 students assessed is below the 25th percentile.
	3) First-time baccalaureate degree-seeking students persist and graduate.				
	First-time full-time undergraduate retention rate is at least 70% and 6-year graduation rate is at least 40%.		First-time full-time undergraduate retention rate is 60 to 65% and 6-year graduation rate is 30 to 35%.		First-time full-time undergraduate retention rate is less than 55% and 6-year graduation rate is less than 25%.
	4) Seniors score similarly to their peers at other institutions on the ETS Proficiency Profile examination.				
	Average senior ETS proficiency profile score is more than the 70th percentile for RU/H institutions.		Average senior ETS proficiency profile score is between the 40th and 60th percentile for RU/H institutions.		Average senior ETS proficiency profile score is less than the 30th percentile for RU/H institutions.
	5) Graduates enroll in further higher education programs.				
	More than 50% of graduates enroll in subsequent academic programs within three years following graduation.		30-40% of graduates enroll in subsequent academic programs within three years following graduation.		Less than 20% of graduates enroll in subsequent academic programs within three years following graduation.
	6) Seniors respond similarly to their peers at other institutions to select National Survey of Student Engagement questions.				
	Students' responses to NSSE Student Engagement questions are higher than peers at other institutions (effect size +0.8 or more).		Students' responses to NSSE Student Engagement questions are similar to peers at other institutions (effect size between -0.5 and +0.5).		Students' responses to NSSE Student Engagement questions are lower than peers at other institutions (effect size -0.8 or less).
	7) Graduate students secure jobs or continue their education.				
	Employment placement of master's and PhD graduates in degree-appropriate positions within 1 year of graduation is more than 85%.		Employment placement of master's and PhD graduates in degree-appropriate positions within 1 year of graduation is 65 to 75%.		Employment placement of master's and PhD graduates in degree-appropriate positions within 1 year of graduation is less than 50%.
	8) Students produce independently reviewed research and creative products.				
	Students produce more than 200 independently reviewed research and creative products annually.		Students produce 100 to 150 independently reviewed research and creative products annually.		Students produce less than 50 independently reviewed research and creative products annually.

Mission Fulfillment Rubric by Theme					
Likert Scale	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Theme	**Above Mission Expectation**		**Meets Mission Expectation**		**Below Mission Expectation**
Research: To Create and Disseminate New Knowledge, Insight, Technology, Artistic and Scholarly Works	**9) Faculty publish peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and books.**				
	The number of peer-reviewed publications per year per faculty member with a research workload is more than 1.5.		The number of peer-reviewed publications per year per faculty member with a research workload is 0.75 to 1.25.		The number of peer-reviewed publications per year per faculty member with a research workload is less than 0.50.
	10) Faculty conduct externally funded research at a rate comparable to peer research institutions.				
	Grant or contract research expenditures per faculty member are more than $200,000 per year.		Grant or contract research expenditures per faculty member are $75,000 to $125,000 per year.		Grant or contract research expenditures per faculty member are less than $50,000 per year.
	11) Faculty publications are commonly cited.				
	Five years after publication, the average number of citations per publication is more than 12.		Five years after publication, the average number of citations per publication is 8 to 10.		Five years after publication, the average number of citations per publication is less than 6.
	12) Faculty perform and exhibit at the state, national, and international level.				
	The number of creative exhibitions and performances per faculty FTE in the fine and performing arts is more than 3.5.		The number of creative exhibitions and performances per faculty FTE in the fine and performing arts is 2.0 to 3.0.		The number of creative exhibitions and performances per faculty FTE in the fine and performing arts is less than 1.5.
	13) Baccalaureate students complete a research course or project.				
	More than 30% of baccalaureate students complete a research, thesis, or honors project.		15 to 25% of baccalaureate students complete a research, thesis, or honors project.		Less than 10% of baccalaureate students complete a research, thesis, or honors project.
	14) Students produce independently reviewed research and creative products.				
	Students produce more than 200 independently reviewed research and creative products annually.		Students produce 100 to 150 independently reviewed research and creative products annually.		Students produce less than 50 independently reviewed research and creative products annually.
	15) UA Museum of the North collections are used for research by visiting scholars and students.				
	More than 300 visiting professional and student scholars and local graduate students use the Museum of the North collections annually.		150 to 250 visiting professional and student scholars and local graduate students use the Museum of the North collections annually.		Less than 100 visiting professional and student scholars and local graduate students use the Museum of the North collections annually.
	16) Rasmuson Library Alaska and Polar Regions collections are used by scholars, students, and the public.				
	The number of online accesses of Alaska and Polar Regions collections and Archives materials is more than 250,000 annually.		The number of online accesses of Alaska and Polar Regions collections and Archives materials is 100,000 to 200,000 annually.		The number of online accesses of Alaska and Polar Regions collections and Archives materials is less than 50,000 annually.

Mission Fulfillment Rubric by Theme					
Likert Scale	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Theme	**Above Mission Expectation**		**Meets Mission Expectation**		**Below Mission Expectation**
Prepare: Alaska's Career, Technical, and Professional Workforce	**17) Professional, career, and technical students graduate in Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development high-demand job area programs.**				
	The number of high-demand job area program graduates is more than 775 annually.		The number of high- demand job area program graduates is 580 to 650 annually.		The number of high- demand job area program graduates is less than 460 annually.
	18) Rural campus students graduate in Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development high-demand job area programs or from programs that prepare them for rural jobs.				
	More than 120 rural campus students annually complete Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development high-demand job area programs or programs that prepare them for rural jobs.		70 to 100 rural campus students annually complete Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development high-demand job area programs or programs that prepare them for rural jobs.		Less than 50 rural campus students annually complete Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development high-demand job area programs or programs that prepare them for rural jobs.
	19) Professional, career, and technical students pass programmatic state or national exams.				
	More than 75% of programs with state or national exams for certification have pass rates of 80% or higher.		40 to 60% percent of programs with state or national exams for certification have pass rates of 80% or higher.		Less than 25% percent of programs with state or national exams for certification have pass rates of 80% or higher.
	20) High school students complete tech prep courses and programs.				
	More than 350 high school students complete tech-prep course work annually.		250 to 300 high school students complete tech-prep course work annually.		Less than 200 high school students complete tech-prep course work annually.
Connect: Alaska Native, Rural, and Urban Communities by Sharing Knowledge and Ways of Knowing	**21) Alaska Native and rural baccalaureate students earn certificates and degrees at rates similar to other students.**				
	Alaska Native and rural baccalaureate students earn certificates and degrees in a proportion to enrollment at 95 to 100% of the rate of other students.		Alaska Native and rural baccalaureate students earn certificates and degrees in a proportion to enrollment at 70 to 85% of the rate of other students.		Alaska Native and rural baccalaureate students earn certificates and degrees in a proportion to enrollment at less than 60% of the rate of other students.
	22) Students complete Alaska Native and rural-related courses and programs.				
	More than 15% of students complete Alaska Native- and rural-related courses annually.		8 to12% of students complete Alaska Native- and rural-related courses annually.		Less than 5% of students complete Native- and rural-related courses annually.
	23) Student projects, theses, and dissertations incorporate indigenous knowledge.				
	More than 15 student projects, theses, and dissertations incorporate indigenous knowledge annually.		5 to 10 student projects, theses, and dissertations incorporate indigenous knowledge annually.		No student projects, theses, and dissertations incorporate indigenous knowledge annually.
	24) Collaborative use of indigenous knowledge is demonstrated in independently reviewed research and creative products.				
	More than 15 independently reviewed research and creative products annually demonstrate collaborative use of indigenous knowledge.		5 to 10 independently reviewed research and creative products annually demonstrate collaborative use of indigenous knowledge.		No independently reviewed research and creative products annually demonstrate collaborative use of indigenous knowledge.

Mission Fulfillment Rubric by Theme					
Likert Scale	5	4	3	2	1
Theme	**Above Mission Expectation**		**Meets Mission Expectation**		**Below Mission Expectation**
	25) Alaska Native Language Archive collections are used by scholars, students, and the public.				
	The Alaska Native Language Archive provides more than 250 consultations annually.		The Alaska Native Language Archive provides 125 to 175 consultations annually.		The Alaska Native Language Archive provides less than 50 consultations annually.
Engage: Alaskans through Outreach for Continuing Education and Community and Economic Development	**26) Partnerships demonstrate impacts that are mutually beneficial to the university and the community, and result in faculty scholarship.**				
	At least 20 partnerships in place for 5 years demonstrate mutually beneficial and impactful relationships, and at least 10 such partnerships result in faculty scholarship (technical reports, curriculum, research reports, policy reports, publications, etc.).		13 to 17 partnerships in place for 5 years demonstrate mutually beneficial and impactful relationships, and 4 to 6 such partnerships result in faculty scholarship (technical reports, curriculum, research reports, policy reports, publications, etc.).		Less than 10 partnerships in place for 5 years demonstrate mutually beneficial and impactful relationships, and less than 3 such partnerships result in faculty scholarship (technical reports, curriculum, research reports, policy reports, publications, etc.).
	27) Alaskans complete non-credit workshops.				
	CES, MAP, and AFES conduct more than 700 non-credit workshops annually.		CES, MAP, and AFES conduct 500 to 600 non-credit workshops annually		CES, MAP, and AFES conduct less than 400 non-credit workshops annually
	28) Youth participate in the 4-H program and develop life skills.				
	More than 20,000 youth participate in 4-H annually.		10,000 to 15,000 youth participate in 4-H annually.		Less than 5,000 youth participate in 4-H annually.
	29) Research-based publications intended for the general public are distributed to Alaskans.				
	CES distributes more than 320,000 publications by paper or online.		CES distributes 250,000 to 280,000 publications by paper or online.		CES distributes less than 210,000 publications by paper publication or online.
	30) Alaskans participate in advisory board meetings and consultations with service faculty and staff.				
	CES records more than 45,000 consultations annually.		CES records between 30,000 and 35,000 consultations annually.		CES records less than 20,000 consultations annually.
	31) Businesses engage with UAF in agreements that lead to economic development.				
	UAF achieves or surpasses at least 3 of the 4 targets for economic development: 70 invention disclosures; 70 non-disclosure agreements; 3 patents; 30 licenses		UAF achieves or surpasses 2 of the 4 targets for economic development: 70 invention disclosures; 70 non-disclosure agreements; 3 patents; 30 licenses		UAF achieves or surpasses 1 of the 4 targets for economic development: 70 invention disclosures; 70 non-disclosure agreements; 3 patents; 30 licenses

These indicators are designed to assess key components of each of UAF's core themes. The diversity of UAF's mission justifies the substantial number of indicators. Each indicator assesses an integral part of UAF's mission to educate our students, connect with our community, and serve our state. Slight changes have been made to the indicators since the Year One report, as we have discovered difficulties in gathering information or have decided that a different benchmark would provide more useful information to the institution, but the majority of indicators remain the same.

While efforts have been made in the past to share accreditation information (for example, UAF posts its accreditation self-evaluation reports and evaluators' reports on a public website), we have not been systematic in disseminating the information to key constituencies. To better assess mission fulfillment, progress on accreditation indicators and benchmarks will be reported annually to the Chancellor's Cabinet (which includes the chancellor, vice chancellors, and associate vice chancellors) and Faculty Senate Administrative Committee (which includes the Faculty Senate president, president elect, and committee chairs) starting in fall 2014. These groups will provide input on the usefulness of the indicators and data, and will also offer guidance on any changes that are suggested by the information. UAF does not have a board of trustees. Instead, the UA System (composed of UAF, the University of Alaska Anchorage, and the University of Alaska Southeast) has an 11-member Board of Regents, appointed by the governor of the state of Alaska. UAF periodically reports on accreditation status (e.g., the process and outcome of major reviews) to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of that body.

Data Collection

Data are collected annually for almost all of the indicators. Some, like the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), are not administered annually and data are collected less frequently. Multiple sources contribute to the reporting: units, schools, and colleges provide information on programs, faculty, and students, while the Office of Planning, Analysis, and Institutional Research (PAIR) collects other data centrally. The data are organized and analyzed by the accreditation liaison officer and accreditation coordinator. Indicator reports are available on the Accreditation website.

UAF also engages in broad and holistic assessment of the institution across different programs and services. For 10 years UAF has annually reported, assessed, and planned to improve its performance on some basic productivity metrics: high-demand job area degrees and certificates awarded, student credit hour production, undergraduate student retention, externally funded research expenditures, and university generated revenue. For the past three years, the metrics have been expanded to 32. For example, metrics include graduation rates at the baccalaureate and associate level, annual number of publications in the sciences, citations to those publications, and annual outreach publications through the Cooperative Extension Service. A number of these metrics are also UAF indicators. These performance reports are widely distributed and discussed within UAF, and are submitted to the UA Statewide administration including the Board of Regents and to the state Office of Management and Budget.

In addition to administering the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every three years, a UA Graduate Survey has been administered annually since 2006. The survey gathers information including graduate satisfaction with UAF programs and employment after graduation. Additionally, UAF was an early adopter in the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities' Voluntary System of Accountability, and maintains an up-to-date College Portrait. UAF has participated in the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) for more than two decades.

UAF acts continuously to assess and improve the educational experience for its students. Students in every course evaluate their teachers at the end of each semester. UAF is moving to an online student evaluation system in 2015 to use student feedback in a more timely and responsive manner.

Each certificate and degree program is evaluated every five years in a program review process, which includes a review of each program's assessment of student learning outcomes. Faculty members evaluate courses in the undergraduate Core Curriculum every year. Since 2004, regular learning outcomes assessment has been expected of every degree and undergraduate certificate program. Approximately 40 programs are reviewed each year and must provide evidence of assessment and of their students meeting the learning outcomes of the program.

Programs are reviewed by a faculty committee, administrative committee, and by the Provost and Chancellor's Cabinet on quality, productivity, and efficiency criteria. While these reviews are not public,

they are available to faculty and administration and each program reviewed receives feedback on its report and Student Learning Outcomes assessment. Programs that are not satisfactory are given targets for improvement or are recommended for discontinuation.

In fall 2014, some programs will undergo a special program review cycle. Following a cut in funding from the Alaska State Legislature and increasing fixed costs that resulted in a $12-$14 million shortfall for FY15, UAF implemented a comprehensive budget evaluation process. One of the recommendations was special review for programs with low enrollment, high cost of delivery, or lack of centrality to UAF's mission. While the university is facing a challenging funding situation, the university is committed to making strategic investments in key programs and sustaining the level of service that UAF provides to the students, community, and state.

Beginning in 2014, research units such as the Institute of Arctic Biology and the Geophysical Institute are undergoing a review process modeled on academic program review. Research program review focuses on efficiency, productivity, centrality to mission, and self-assessment. Student services, intercollegiate athletics, administrative and facilities services, and other university units are all included in a comprehensive UA Board of Regents requirement to review centrality to mission, performance, and cost-effectiveness, and the first comprehensive review is intended to be complete by the end of FY15.

UAF has identified five core themes that communicate the essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission. Objectives have been identified for each core theme to further clarify UAF's purpose and intent. Thirty-one meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement have been identified. Thresholds have been set for all indicators to assess mission fulfillment. The university collects and analyzes the data regularly and uses its findings as it establishes priorities and objectives to fulfill its mission in a sustainable fashion.

UAF is satisfied that its core themes and objectives are valid, and that the indicators selected are providing sufficient evidence to assess mission fulfillment and sustainability. The indicators assess each of the key aspects of UAF's mission and represent important activities within each of the mission themes. Some indicators are part of required performance reporting to the state of Alaska, and are considered as part of the process of evaluating the UA System's annual budget request. Some indicators are reported nationally and contribute to national university rankings. Collectively the indicators reflect institutional performance, quality, and success in meeting important state needs, and so indicate UAF's capacity to sustain itself by continuing to recruit students, secure research, outreach, and education grants, and retain its annual general fund support from the state of Alaska.

PART II

EXAMPLE 1: ASSESSMENT OF ENGL 111X (Core Curriculum)

INDICATOR: Students achieve intended learning outcomes within their program.

UAF has made a consistent effort toward improving assessment of student learning. All programs have posted Student Learning Outcomes and an assessment plan. Degree programs submit summaries of their assessment activities every two years and undergo program review every five years. UAF has made significant progress toward its expressed goal that each program demonstrate direct evidence of students' achievement of the program's intended learning outcomes. The most important link in the chain of assessment of student learning is curricular and programmatic improvement that results from assessment, and UAF is increasingly seeing evidence that programs are using assessment results in meaningful ways.

Faculty in the departments that offer courses in UAF's Core Curriculum assess their courses annually. Introduction to Academic Writing (ENGL 111X) is one of only a few courses that is required of all baccalaureate students. In the past two years, the assessment process for this course has been redesigned to better fit with the goals of the writing program and the university. In 2013, the English Department Composition Committee developed learning outcomes and assessment rubrics that are based on American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) LEAP rubrics for critical writing and analysis.

ENGL 111X is taught by full-time faculty, adjunct instructors, and graduate student TAs. One challenge in the past has been insufficient consistency in learning outcomes and assessment across the many sections offered (generally 12-20 per semester). To improve consistency, all instructors agreed to common learning outcomes beginning in fall 2013, and understanding the goals and outcomes of the course are a required component of graduate student training.

To publicize the goals of the required writing sequence, and to increase awareness of the importance of writing throughout the curriculum, the program developed the Write Alaska website. The website serves as a resource for the campus community, and features interviews with faculty, an overview of the university writing program, lessons and handouts for instructors, and a guidebook for all ENGL 111X instructors. The guidebook explicitly links the course objectives to the university mission (p. 17-18), demonstrating how training in critical analysis during ENGL 111X contributes to the university mission of educating "students for active citizenship and prepares them for lifelong learning and careers."

All 12 Fairbanks campus spring 2014 sections of ENGL 111X contributed to the assessment effort. Each student assembled an online portfolio of his or her work in the class using Google Drive, which is accessible to all UAF students and faculty. Students placed a diagnostic essay, an information literacy project, and a reflective essay (with all identifying information removed) into Google Drive. After the end of the semester, the university writing director led a group of six instructors (full-time faculty, adjuncts, and TAs) in a weeklong assessment project. First, instructors were introduced to the rubrics for writing communication and the group worked to review the outcomes and objectives, and to calibrate their scales for assessing the texts. Then readers independently assessed randomly selected course portfolios. Readers determined whether students were meeting benchmark, milestone, or capstone levels of the learning outcomes.

Readers determined whether or not the assignments reflected critical reading, writing, and thinking, information literacy, and knowledge transfer. They noted areas of improvement and opportunities for further partnering with the university to support student development in writing, paying particular attention to areas where students struggle with these concepts. An important finding of the analysis was that 35.4 percent of students entering ENGL 111X did not reach the milestone level in self-assessment in their diagnostic essays, though they did better with mechanics, with 18.7 percent falling below milestone levels. Other findings indicated that only 52.4 percent of students reached benchmark levels for use of

sources in their final diagnostic, and that 50 percent reached milestone level for assessing their writing choices.

Conclusions by the assessment committee led to recommendations that touch on several aspects of student learning and mission fulfillment. They include communicating findings on student preparedness to local high school teachers. This step links to the core themes (Educate), the strategic plan (Improve assistance to students in making transitions across all phases of the education continuum), and *Shaping Alaska's Future* (Productive Partnerships with Alaska's Schools) and is especially important because around 80 percent of UAF first-time freshmen come from Fairbanks area high schools.

The assessment also led to recommendations to revise the prompts for signature assignments collected for the portfolios, and to address the terms of the assignment more clearly in the program guidebook, on Write Alaska, during Orientation, and in ENGL 685, the course that trains English Department graduate TAs. Further recommendations included reducing the number of assignments collected for assessment, and devoting more curricular attention to how the writer's ideas relate to the use of sources. In response to the findings, the ENGL 685 curriculum was revised to train teachers to increase students' rhetorical knowledge about audience, purpose, and context for their writing.

This course assessment demonstrates a successful process from design of outcomes through assignments and rubrics to a careful analysis of the data. Most importantly, the findings are being used to inform curricular changes not only in ENGL 111X classrooms, but they also are being communicated to high school teachers and the graduate students who will be future teachers of this course and others. It is a clear example of the way that assessment of student learning outcomes supports UAF's core themes and mission.

EXAMPLE 2: RETENTION AND GRADUATION EFFORTS

INDICATOR: First-time degree-seeking baccalaureate students persist and graduate.

The six-year baccalaureate graduation rates within the UA System (31 percent) and UAF (42 percent) are somewhat low by national standards but have been steadily increasing. The university is committed to improving undergraduate degree program completion rates, and we assess the impact of our efforts to improve these rates. UAF tracks retention and graduation rates and reports on a regular basis to the UA president, the Alaska state Office of Management and Budget, and the Board of Regents. Current enrollment and retention rates are distributed to all deans and senior administrators each semester on a weekly basis as registration deadlines approach and are discussed at Deans' Council and Provost's Council meetings.

The baccalaureate six-year graduation rate rose to an all-time high in FY14, currently 42 percent, with a possible slight increase following summer 2014 graduation. UAF began a concerted effort to increase baccalaureate student graduation rates in FY08 by raising the baccalaureate admission standard and instituting mandatory course placement for many 100-level courses. The latter process was not completed until FY09. UAF has also instituted Supplemental Instruction (FY08), DegreeWorks as an advising aid (FY10), and elective first-year seminars (FY11). There is a long lag in this metric between actions and effects, but these measures have begun to affect six-year graduation rates. Rates have risen from 31.5 percent in FY10 to 42.0 percent in FY14.

This indicator is linked to UAF's mission statement and to the *Shaping Alaska's Future* theme of Student Achievement and Attainment and particularly to the effect statement "full-time baccalaureate degree-seeking students graduate in four to five years at rates competitive with those at our established peer institutions." While UAF tracks six-year graduation rates because that is the national standard, the UA System has committed to improving four-year graduation rates. Central to this effort is the "Stay on Track" campaign (begun in FY12), which encourages baccalaureate students to take at least 30 credits a

year. UAF participates in this campaign through promotional events, New Student Orientation, and advising.

The Alaska Performance Scholarships begun in FY12 should also have a positive effect on graduation rates, but will mainly impact FY16 and beyond. These state-funded scholarships require a collection of high school core courses and are funded at varying levels depending on high school GPA and standardized test scores. These scholarships can only be used for eight semesters and require full-time scholarship recipients to complete 24 credits in their first year and 30 credits in subsequent years.

A comprehensive advising initiative funded by the Legislature for FY12 will have some effect on each future year, but because the greatest loss of potential graduates is to non-retention in the first two years, the maximum effect will not be achieved until FY18. The goal of the initiative is to increase student success, retention, and attainment particularly for first-generation, low-income, and other at-risk students. Efforts include hiring additional advisors, targeting specific populations (low-income, first-generation, degree-completion, student-athletes), and improving training for faculty advisors. Other components of the initiative comprise tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and support for developmental and core-level Math and English students.

During FY14 a task force pursued retention and persistence initiatives. Another task force has been constituted to explore ways to better support students on academic probation, as their retention and graduation rates are significantly lower than those for students in good standing. This group designed an "Academic Recovery" course and is working on revising probation policies for FY15.

This indicator is essential to UAF's success and the data collected are meaningful. They are collected and analyzed regularly by UAF PAIR. The data are disseminated internally on many levels, and made publicly available. UAF has recognized that graduation rates (and to a lesser degree, retention rates) are lower than we would like them to be, and the institution has made clear and systematic efforts to improve, with those efforts also assessed on a regular basis.

PART III

Preparing for Year Seven

Moving forward to Year Seven, UAF will need to continue gathering assessment information and disseminating that information to ensure that it is used to affect policies, curricula, and budgets. Recognizing that we need a more systematic approach to reviewing, discussing, and using indicator assessment information, we have identified additional key constituencies to involve regularly (Chancellor's Cabinet and Faculty Senate). The Chancellor's Cabinet is already very attentive to the indicators that are also UA System metrics, because those are discussed with system administrators and the Board of Regents annually. We need to continue to improve review and reporting of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment. All programs have learning outcomes and an assessment plan, and most are collecting and reviewing assessment data. However, the Program Review process has found that some are still not collecting direct evidence of student learning, and many would benefit from consistent consideration or better documentation of the use of assessment results in their curricular and budgetary decisions. Assessment of the Core Curriculum must also continue to improve. The example given here of ENGL 111X assessment is a fine one, but not all core outcomes are assessed as thoroughly.

UAF has spent several years designing a new General Education curriculum, and a proposal was brought to the Faculty Senate in spring 2014. In April 2014, the UA Board of Regents passed a resolution that the three UA universities shall adopt common general education and developmental and requirements, beginning with common numbering and course descriptions for Mathematics and English. The resolution also indicated that a plan for UA System alignment of all general education courses should be in place by fall 2016. UAF's process of revitalizing General Education has now been subordinated to the UA System goal of alignment. UAF faculty and administration will need to ensure that any new requirements reflect the goals described in our core themes, mission statement, and strategic plan.

As UAF faces continued financial pressures, the university will need to continue to make strategic investments in areas that are central to the its mission and strengths, while reducing funding to other areas. The mission and strengths are explicated by the core themes and objectives, which provide a framework for these deliberations. The process that the university used in spring 2014 to address budget shortfalls exemplifies the approach that UAF will take. In that process, Chancellor Rogers appointed a Budget Options Group to identify and assess both budget reduction and revenue enhancement options. The group identified areas unique to UAF's mission and competitive strengths that should be maintained and/or enhanced. The group then reviewed and analyzed budget ideas submitted from a variety of sources and forwarded a list of options to the UAF Planning and Budget Committee (PBC) for review and assessment. In March 2014, the PBC agreed to guiding principles and a decision process. About 20 additional budget reduction items were added to the initial budget options group list, either by committee members or by other individuals from across the campus community. The PBC rated the reduction/efficiency options and passed those ratings and an evaluative review to the Chancellor's Cabinet in May 2014. Broad feedback was collected and reviewed and the cabinet and chancellor made final budget recommendations in June. This process, which incorporated broad input and gives priority to continued fulfillment of the university's mission, will be the model for future budget decisions.

UAF is a complex and diverse university, and our mission, core themes, and objectives must reflect that complexity and diversity. Assessing the effectiveness of our planning, data collection, and analysis reveals our strengths and weaknesses, and allows us to make changes to better serve Alaska and its people. In short, it makes UAF a better university. We look forward to working with the commission throughout this process.

University Writing Program, English 111X

General Studies/CLA

2013-2014

Submitted by: Sarah Stanley
Contact Information: sstanley2@alaska.edu
Date: July 1, 2014

1. Spring 2014 Assessment Plan

All English 111X classes taught on Fairbanks West campus (12) participated in Spring 2014 assessment. Diagnostic essays, Research papers, and Reflective assignments were collected, through Google Drive, as an electronic course portfolio.

The University Writing Director then led a group of 6 teachers in applying the program-designed, AAC&U-based rubrics to student work in course portfolios.

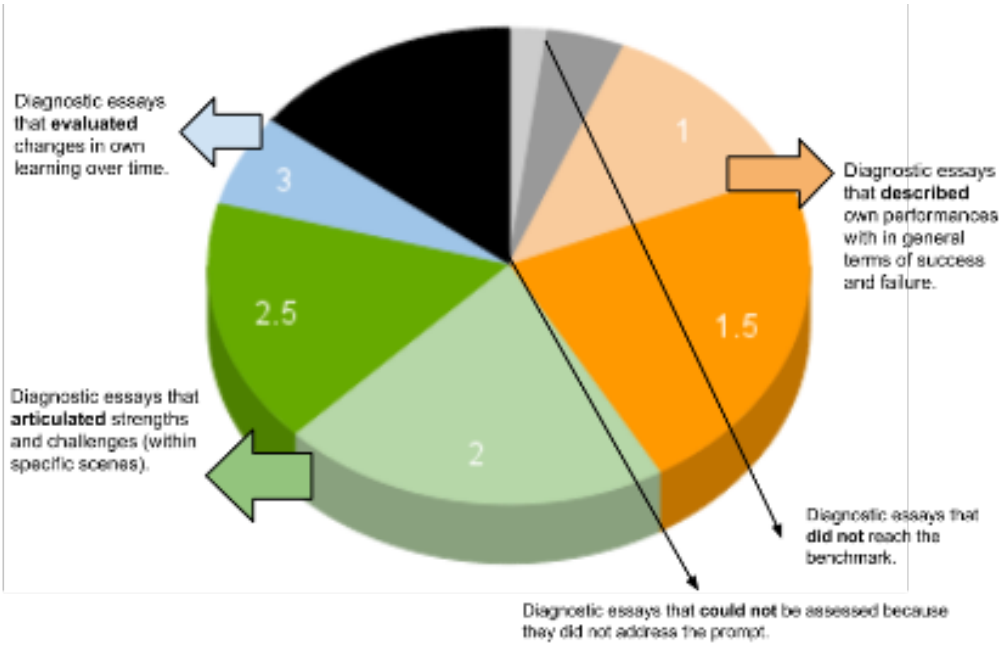
First, the group met to calibrate their scales for assessing the texts, then readers independently assessed randomly selected course portfolios. Readers determined whether students were meeting benchmark, milestone, or capstone levels of our outcomes (see rubrics).

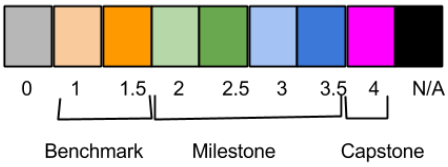
Four course portfolios were chosen for assessment, and two readers read each selected course portfolio. The Director and research assistants compiled the results, reading student writing a third time if there was a disagreement between the readers of more than one point.

2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above

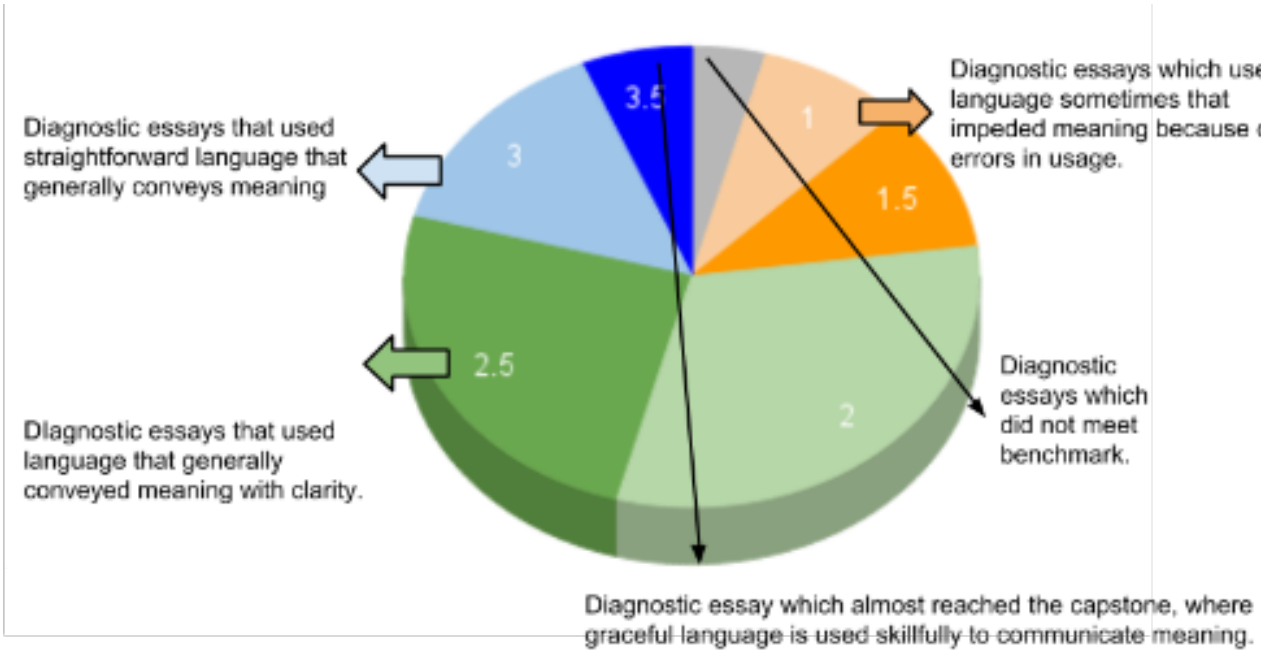
Diagnostic Essays: Where are students when they enter our classrooms?

Control of Syntax and Mechanics in Diagnostic Essays





Self-Assessment in Diagnostic Essays

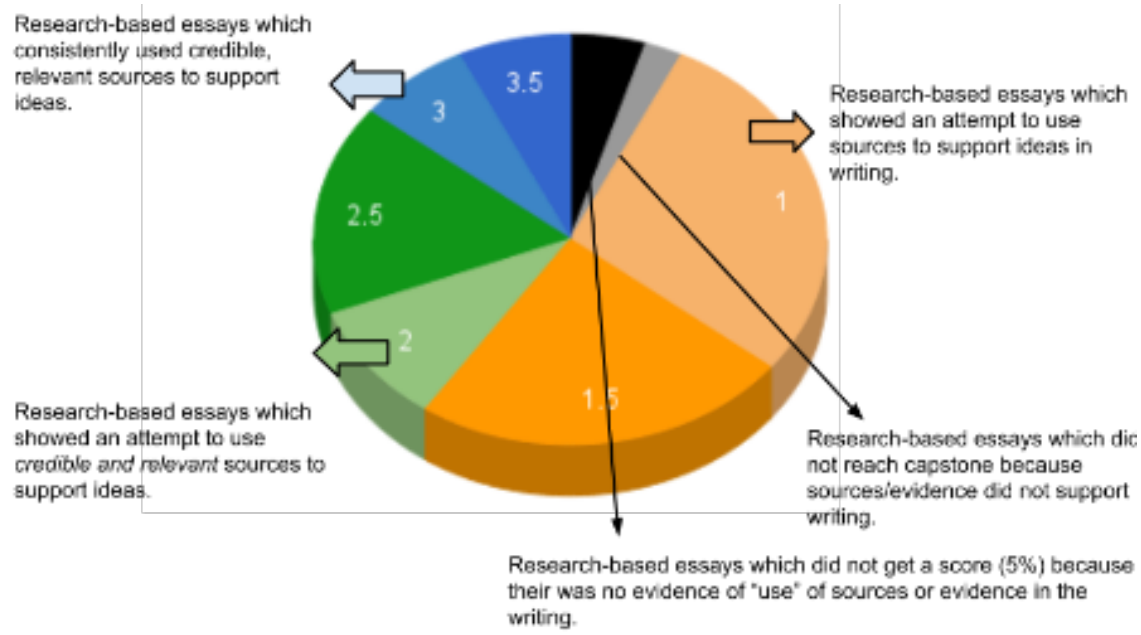


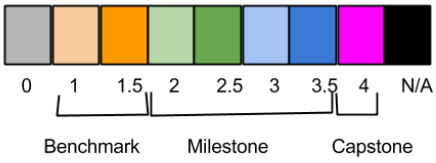
- Only a small percentage of these essays (5%) did not meet our benchmarks; writing placement is 95% accurate.
- We scored essays (less than 10 %) that were close to reaching capstone achievement.

We learned that for more than 75% of our students we should expect work that communicates *general* meaning with clarity from our students when they arrive. We also learned that about 40% of our students are able to articulate or evaluate their previous learning; however, more than 50% of the diagnostics reflect that students may not have understood the question, or had difficulty with specific discussion of their previous learning. The results of this assessment will be shared with high school teachers.

Research Paper-Projects: What did we learn about students' informational literacy?

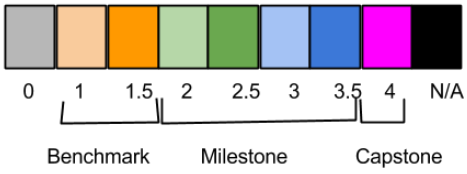
Uses of Sources and Evidence in Research Writing





Intellectual Curiosity in Research-Based Writing

Essays were scored by 2 and sometimes 3 reviewers.



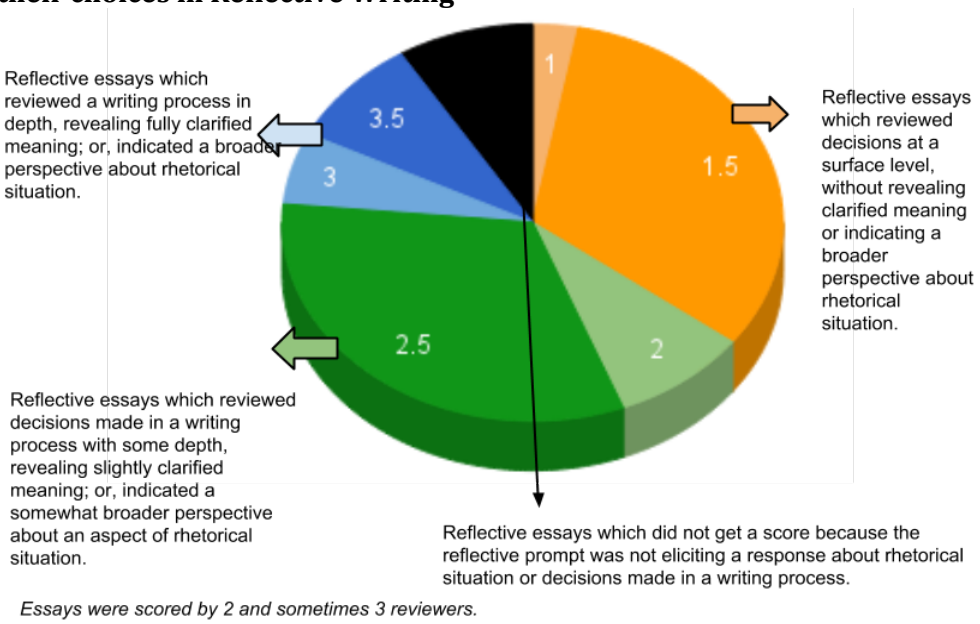
Analysis:

- More than 65% of research-based writing reaches milestone achievement for intellectual curiosity, with <5% reaching capstone level.
- More than 50% of our students are *just* at the benchmark for their use of Sources and Evidence to support ideas.

We learned that "intellectual curiosity" is more than just interest in the subject; instead, it should reflect the level of depth a student presents in their writing. 50% of our students reached milestone levels for this habit of mind. Students in English 111x show varying experience in critical thinking about research-based writing,. Just 52.4% of our students are evidencing a benchmark for uses of sources and evidence.

Final Reflective Prompt: What did we learn about students' ability to assess their choices in writing?

Assessing their choices in Reflective Writing



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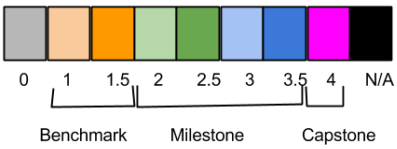

Analysis:

- Only 50% of students' reflective writing reached milestone levels for assessing the choices they make. However, nearly10% of these were almost at the capstone level.
- 10% of the samples could not be scored because the prompts did not elicit responses about assessing choice.

We learned that the prompt for this signature assignment needs a complete revision. Also, because so few of these writing samples drew on terms for the rhetorical situation, a concept that is central to the 111x curriculum, we plan to use these terms explicitly in the prompt, the Program guidebook, on Write Alaska, during orientation, and reinforced in English 685

3. Assessment and Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above

- We will use only one diagnostic prompt for all 111X sections in 2014-2015, including all UAF campuses and course formats.
    - We will include specific instructions to write "I" in case some students come with a version of the rule that one should *never* use "I" in an academic writing situation.
    - We will specify the diagnostic prompt so that it communicates what will be assessed with the rubric. For example, it will be stated that we are looking for critical self-assessment and reflection.

- We will no longer collect research-based writing in our assessments.
    - The assessment process (collecting and reading) was worthwhile but time-intensive for faculty. Assessing just the diagnostic and reflective essays will save resources on the assessment.
    - As part of a General Education discussion on campus in Spring of 2014, the Dean of the Library asserted that faculty in the library will take responsibility in assessing information literacy for the new learning outcomes.
- We will devote more curricular attention to how the writer's ideas and purpose in the writing relates to the use of sources or evidence.
    - One teacher's assignment required students to use sources from at least three different academic disciplines. We will increase our resources on WriteAlaska.org for teaching research-based writing, rather than referring to it as "synthesis" exclusively.
- We will be spending more time on teacher training and the importance of framing the assessment assignments. All teachers should use the program's reflective prompt as a final assignment for 111X in order to ensure systematic review of how well our curriculum supports transfer.
    - We have revised the English 685 curriculum (which supports beginning teachers in the Writing Program) so that participants create assignments that highlight aspects of the rhetorical situation to increase our student's rhetorical knowledge about audience, purpose, and context for their writing.

4. Identify the faculty members involved in reaching the conclusions drawn above and agreeing upon the curricular changes resulting

All University Writing Program changes will be addressed by the Composition Committee of the English Department. The assessment committee included the following faculty.

Sarah Stanley, Chair
Kendell Newman-Sadiik, Write Alaska Research Assistant
Jaclyn Bergamino, Write Alaska Research Assistant
Richard Carr
Eileen Harney
James Ruppert
Carolyn Kremers
Katie Boylan
Rose Kim
Daniel Dyer

UAF GRADUATION RATES FY10-FY14

Six-year baccalaureate first-time freshmen graduation rates by reporting year

GRAD RATE	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
4-year	10.7%	13.4%	12.9%	14.4%	15.0%
5-year	23.8%	25.6%	30.6%	31.1%	31.2%
6-year	31.5%	30.0%	33.2%	37.1%	41.0%
8-year	30.6%	36.2%	37.6%	36.2%	39.3%

Six-year baccalaureate firs-time freshmen graduation rates by cohort year

GRAD RATE	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11
4-year	9.5%	10.7%	9.1%	9.2%	10.7%	13.4%	12.9%	14.4%	15.0%
5-year	19.9%	25.2%	24.5%	23.8%	25.6%	30.6%	31.1%	31.2%	
6-year	26.8%	30.9%	31.5%	30.0%	33.2%	37.1%	41.0%		
8-year	30.6%	36.2%	37.6%	36.2%	39.3%				

SOURCE: UAF Planning, Analysis, and Institutional Research (July, 2014)