

Continuing Discussion of UAF's Accreditation Themes (Essential Elements of UAF's Mission)

October 1, 2009

At their meeting on Monday September 28th the UAF accreditation steering committee discussed the feedback on the proposed accreditation themes provided by the college, schools and student and enrollment services working groups and a brief summary of the first 279 responses to the online survey. The steering committee drafted the following themes based on the input to date (no particular order implied; Themes with a majority of steering committee votes are underlined):

Alaska Native and Rural Education and Scholarship - there was some discussion about whether we should refer to indigenous peoples, populations and/or communities therein.

Community Engagement, Public Service and Outreach Across Alaska - we discussed what community engagement means and the need to indicate that this UAF work takes place across Alaska, not just where we have campuses. Some suggested that our outreach and service extends well beyond Alaska and others suggested that this item should be combined with workforce development. Notably, Economic Development was deleted from earlier versions of this theme. One alternative suggested was "Reaching across Alaska through Public Service and Community Engagement"

Educating Alaska's Workforce - Some survey responders indicated they would like to see Economic development rolled into this one. Some suggested we bring Vocational Technical Education into the wording. Should the theme be "Workforce, Career, and Technical Education" or "Educating Alaska's Vocational Technical Workforce?"

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity with an emphasis on Alaska, the Circumpolar North, and their diverse peoples - Some prefer "with an emphasis on high latitudes." Some suggested two research themes - the first "Research with an emphasis on high latitudes" and the second, "Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities Enhancing Education." Some suggested that this theme was too wordy. The emphasis on "Alaska, the Circumpolar North, and their diverse peoples" is in our mission statement.

Baccalaureate Education and Lifelong Learning - The steering committee was divided about including "academic preparation" in this theme. Survey responses to date indicate we need to address the AA and AS and other avenues of transitioning to the baccalaureate – perhaps referring more generally to undergraduate education – however such a change would conflict with the workforce theme to some degree. Notably "life-long learning" is in our mission statement. The Provost pointed out that lifelong learning probably fits better with community engagement. We may want to indicate we serve traditional and nontraditional students in this theme as well.

PhD, Graduate Education, and Advanced Study - The steering committee liked the idea of indicating that UAF offers PhD programs because a minority of institutions nationwide does so. Having post - docs at UAF was part of the conversation suggesting the inclusion of Advanced Study. A minority of the steering committee supported "Graduate Education including the PhD (or doctorate)."