

*University of Alaska Southeast
Student Retention Study*

Prepared for:
University of Alaska Southeast



Research-Based Consulting

Juneau
Anchorage

June 2009

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Executive Summary

The University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) contracted with McDowell Group to conduct a study examining student retention at UAS. There were four elements to the project: I. a survey of current students; II. a survey of students who had recently transferred or withdrawn from UAS; III. two discussion groups with current students; and IV. interviews with staff and faculty. Following are key findings and recommendations.

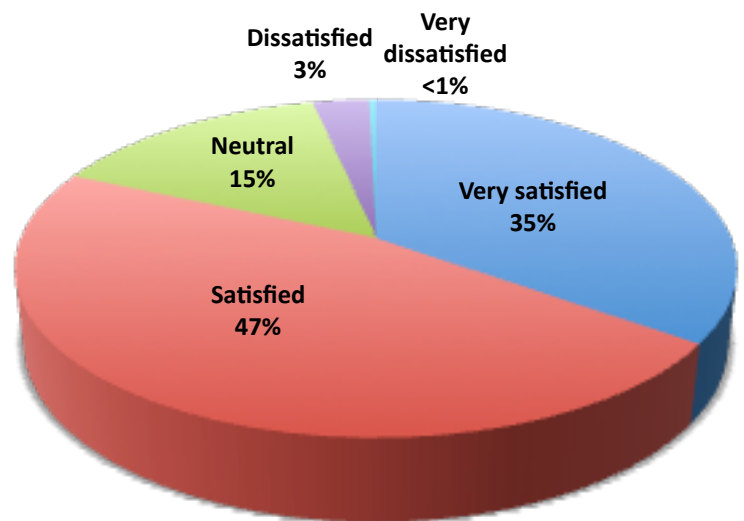
I. Survey of Current Students

All students currently registered for at least six credits were invited to participate in an online survey. Of the 1,351 students contacted, 575 completed the survey. Results were tested for statistical differences among several sub-groups, including part-time vs. full-time, age, campus, school (Arts & Sciences, Management, Education), and class.

Current UAS students report high levels of satisfaction with their overall educational experience, with only 3 percent saying they are dissatisfied.

- Four out of five students were satisfied with their overall educational experience, including 35 percent who were very satisfied. Part-time students were more likely to be very satisfied than full-time students (41 percent vs. 30 percent).
- Satisfaction was high throughout the other sub-groups, with only three groups showing a statistically significant difference: students over 40 years old, School of Education students, and graduate students were all slightly more satisfied than their counterparts.
- Students who said they were likely to withdraw or transfer reported lower satisfaction ratings: 17 percent were very satisfied (vs. 39 percent of those unlikely to transfer), and 12 percent were dissatisfied (vs. 1 percent of those unlikely to transfer).
- Comparing results of full-time students to those from full-time students in a survey conducted by McDowell Group in 1999, overall satisfaction has increased. Full-time students who were very satisfied increased from 24 percent in 1999 to 30 percent in 2009, while those dissatisfied decreased from 11 to 4 percent. (Those in the “neutral” category increased from 9 to 16 percent, likely due to the switch in methodology from telephone to online fielding.)

Overall, how satisfied are you with your UAS educational experience?



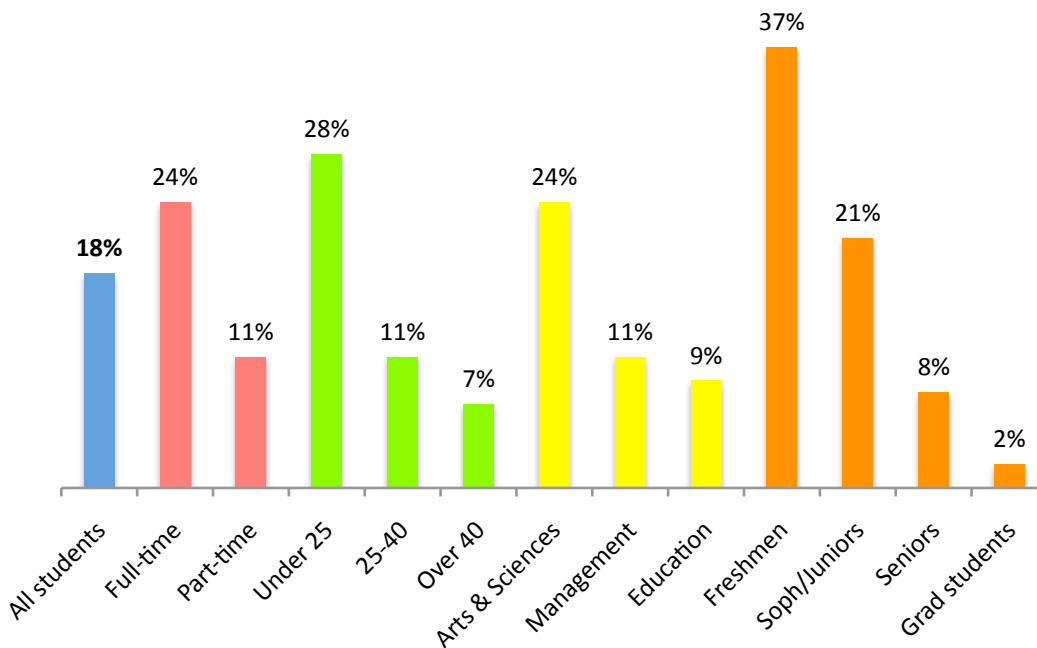
Most individual aspects of UAS were rated highly in terms of satisfaction, particularly instructors/professors. The areas with the highest dissatisfaction were course scheduling/availability, course variety, and extracurricular opportunities.

- In addition to having the highest composite satisfaction rating, instructors/professors garnered the most very satisfied ratings (36 percent), followed by responsiveness of staff (30 percent) and academic advising from faculty (29 percent). (Detailed results to this series of questions are provided on pages 13 – 17.)
- Part-time students reported higher satisfaction ratings than full-time students in five categories (course variety, course availability/schedule, degree program variety, instructional materials, and staff responsiveness). Full-time students reported higher ratings in two categories (quality of social life and extracurricular activities). Other differences between the two groups were not statistically significant.
- Students were asked to rate the importance of each area. Two of the highest-rated categories in terms of importance (instructors and staff responsiveness) were also two of the highest-rated aspects in terms of satisfaction. However, two other categories rated as most important (course schedule/availability and course variety) were among the lowest-rated aspects in terms of satisfaction.

One out of five students enrolled in a degree program say they are likely to transfer from UAS to complete their degree. Only 2 percent of degree-enrolled students say they are likely to withdraw.

- Full-time students, those under 25 years old, School of Arts and Sciences students, and freshmen are the most likely to think they will transfer.

Percentage of Students Likely or Very Likely to Transfer to Another School
Base: Enrolled in Degree Program



Four out of the top five reasons given by students for wanting to transfer concerned course and program availability and scheduling. A desire to leave Juneau (Sitka/Ketchikan/Alaska) was also a top-ranked reason.

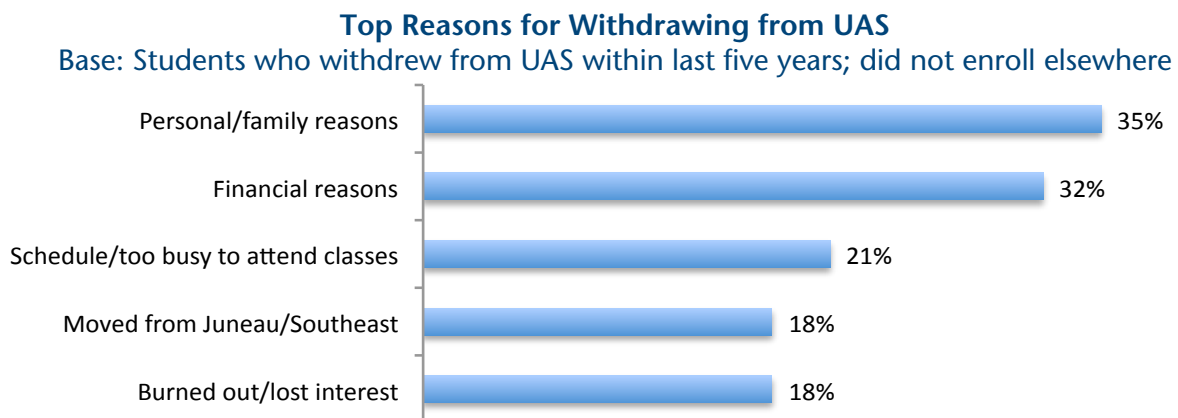
- The top reasons given by students likely to transfer were: desired courses not offered at UAS (54 percent), degree program not offered at UAS (48 percent), want school with more classes available (48 percent), want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska (47 percent), better course scheduling elsewhere (31 percent), and personal/family reasons (24 percent). Only 11 percent said they wanted a school with a better reputation, and 10 percent said faculty was better elsewhere.
- Students planning to transfer from UAS reported higher levels of dissatisfaction with the schedule/availability of courses (40 percent dissatisfied), variety of degree programs (34 percent), variety of courses (33 percent), and extracurricular activities (30 percent). However, they were still generally satisfied with most categories.

II. Survey of Transferred/Withdrawn Students

A combined online and telephone survey was conducted with 192 students who had transferred to another school or had withdrawn from UAS within the last five years, including 131 students who withdrew and 61 students who transferred.

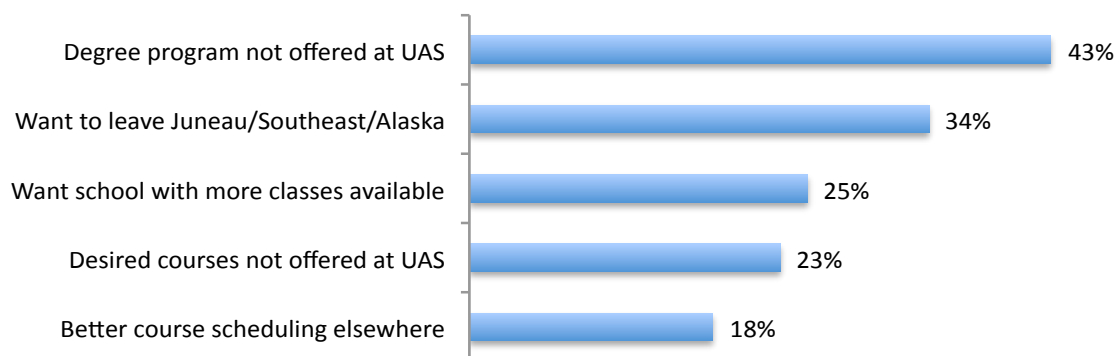
Students who had withdrawn from UAS primarily cited personal reasons (finances, schedule, moved from area) for leaving. Transfer students tended to cite the lack of available degree programs and classes.

- Students who withdrew from UAS were unlikely to reference factors over which the University has any control. Only 11 percent said they were not satisfied with their classes/instructors.
- Echoing comments of current students who said they were likely to transfer, students who had transferred were most likely to be seeking a different degree program or a better variety/schedule of classes. A significant portion also said they wanted to leave the area.



Top Reasons for Transferring from UAS

Base: Students who transferred from UAS within last five years



Both students who transferred and those who withdrew reported high levels of satisfaction with the education they received at UAS.

- Eighty percent of students who withdrew and 77 percent of students who transferred were satisfied with the overall quality of education they received. Only 7 percent of the former and 5 percent of the latter were dissatisfied.

III. Discussion Groups

Two discussion groups with current students were held on campus in April 2009, one consisting of freshmen/sophomores and the other of juniors. Students represented a variety of backgrounds and fields of study. Discussion topics included likes/dislikes about UAS, reasons that students transfer or withdraw, and ways that UAS could increase student retention.

In general, participants echoed what was revealed in the survey of current students. They praised the faculty and the many opportunities given to interact with their instructors. They also appreciated the small, friendly campus, the beautiful setting, and the excellent recreational opportunities. Like the survey respondents, students had a number of complaints about class scheduling, including inconvenient hours and cancelled classes. A related complaint was the lack of availability of required courses, and the amount of time required to obtain a degree. In general, students felt there could be more organized activities, and that it would help in student retention. Nearly everyone agreed that communication about these activities was lacking.

IV. Faculty and Staff Interviews

The study team interviewed 11 staff and faculty members knowledgeable about student retention. Areas of expertise represented by the contacts included student activities, student services, Native students, advising, registration, and various educational disciplines covering both undergraduate and graduate students.

While those interviewed recognized the same factors in the loss of students as those identified in the surveys, they added several new ideas to the discussion. Several contacts pointed out that although retention rates might appear low, a significant portion of students who leave without obtaining their degree have achieved their goals, and have been served well at UAS. Many contacts agreed that faculty should have more guidance from academic administration on day-to-day course scheduling in order to make it as convenient as possible for students. A number of interviewees felt strongly that student advising is in need of improvement, both in

terms of quantity and quality. A related suggestion was offering more orientation services to freshmen as a method of getting them more engaged in both campus and academic life. Contacts agreed that student retention was affected by the lack of traditional college atmosphere, and that many students didn't feel a sense of connection to the University. A number of programs and services were suggested to keep students engaged, including shuttle services, sports teams, child care, more student employment, and better communication to both students and staff/faculty about campus activities and events.

Recommendations

The suggestions below are based on study results. The study team makes these recommendations with several important points in mind:

- UAS has been making improvements in several of these areas and may already have strategies for continuing this improvement.
- The recommendations below generally would not require significant financial investment on the part of the University. For example, among the more frequent suggestions made by students were adding more classes and more degree programs. However, these are excluded from our recommendations with the understanding that such changes require significant funding increases, which are uncertain at this time.
- One of the major complaints made by staff and faculty contacts was that previous retention efforts and suggestions have been ignored, or only tested briefly, then abandoned. UAS is strongly advised to develop action plans in response to the recommendations, assigning responsibility and a timeline to each task. Student retention should be treated as a top priority.

#1: Make student convenience the primary consideration when developing course schedules. Avoid last-minute schedule changes.

The process of scheduling would be improved by more communication between faculty and academic administration, as well as between departments. A small school such as UAS has limited options in terms of the number of classes it can offer and the times of the day it can offer them. However, there does appear to be room for improvement in how classes fit together in the course of the day and week. In the student survey, schedule/availability of courses was the lowest-rated aspect of UAS in terms of satisfaction. Full-time students are particularly frustrated in this regard. Faculty members likely require more guidance from academic administration on when they should offer their classes to make it as convenient as possible for students. Last-minute schedule changes should be strongly discouraged. In turn, academic administration could (and does already) benefit from suggestions from faculty on what makes the most sense for student learning.

A related issue is deciding which group of students UAS would like to accommodate most. Part-time students want more evening classes; full-time students want more day classes. According to satisfaction ratings, schedules appear to accommodate part-time students more than full-time students.

#2: Improve course sequences to enable more students to graduate in a reasonable time frame.

One of the major reasons that students transfer from UAS is the time it takes them to graduate. UAS' small size limits the number of times courses can be offered, but a number of study participants pointed out instances where the semester-to-semester and year-to-year sequence of courses did not make sense for students. When the six-year course sequence is developed, the first priority should be to allow students to progress towards a degree. It was also suggested that some "special interest" courses should be replaced by required courses.

#3: Avoid class cancellations whenever possible.

Related to the idea of improving course sequences is avoiding class cancellations. The six-year course sequence was cited frequently by survey respondents as being unreliable due to dropped or cancelled courses. This creates a sense of instability and insecurity among students: a student counting on a particular course to graduate might have to postpone graduation for an extra semester or year in some cases. UAS should make every effort to honor the planned sequence, and should strongly consider ending its practice of cancelling courses simply for low enrollment.

#4: Improve student advising; ensure that all advisors are adequately trained, and increase required number of contacts with students (especially freshmen).

Advising was seen as a problem area by students and faculty/staff contacts alike. Lack of advising, and poor quality advising, were cited as reasons that students leave UAS. Improved advising services were seen by many as a method of retaining more students.

Increasing the amount of advising offered to students would be one step. Many students complained of not being able to get appointments with their advisors. There also seems to be a particular lack of advising at the freshman level, before students declare a major. Freshman year is a critical time for students in terms of retention; they should be receiving more, not less, guidance from the university. UAS should consider adopting a more proactive advising strategy, where advisors are required to meet with their assigned students on a regularly scheduled basis. Special emphasis could be placed on students at most risk of leaving UAS (including freshmen). Recognizing that some students are difficult to engage, advising could be made a mandatory part of the registration process for degree-seeking students.

Improving the quality of advising would be another step. It was suggested that all advisors, whether staff or faculty, need more training in how to best help their advisees. There should also be a strategic approach to advising: not all students need the same type of advising. It should be customized for each student, according to their class level, origin (local, rural, out-of-state, etc.), and individual needs.

UAS should also consider whether *all* faculty should be required to advise; some reportedly do not have the time, skills, or motivation to advise effectively, while others are enthusiastic about it and even take on extra students. Perhaps there is a way to balance the advising duties among faculty while taking into account their skills and preferences.

#5: Enhance students' sense of belonging by increasing engagement in campus life. Create more opportunities for students to interact outside of class, both in academic and extra-curricular contexts. Improve communication with students regarding activities.

Although most students who transfer or withdraw do not directly cite a lack of campus life, it was noted in both the discussion groups and the executive interviews as a factor in student retention. A student who is more engaged in campus life, one who feels a sense of connectedness and belonging, is less likely to leave.

Depending on funding and staff availability, UAS should consider offering more organized activities, particularly recreational activities such as kayaking, snowshoeing, and hiking. Getting students involved in the organization of the activities is a key element of this strategy.

The simplest way to increase student participation in activities is to develop a program where students would be informed via email on a regular basis of upcoming activities and events. Discussion group participants mentioned not being informed of such activities as the Banff Film Festival, the Polar Bear Dip, end-of-year barbeque, classes at the Rec Center, Global Gala at the Rec Center, and meetings of the German Club, among others. It is important to make this a pro-active effort: students are much less likely to seek out activities on bulletin boards or on the UAS website than to simply read their email. Students could have the option of opting out of the email program, but should be included in it automatically when they enroll.

Students are also likely to benefit from additional opportunities to engage with faculty outside of the classroom. Study participants cited interaction with their professors outside of the classroom as highlights of their academic experience. According to interviews, this type of academic engagement has a positive affect on student academic performance and retention.

Continuing efforts to maximize student employment on campus is also strongly encouraged.

#6: Make retention of effective faculty a top priority.

According to study results, UAS' faculty is its greatest asset. Students expressed deep appreciation for their teaching skills, knowledge, guidance, willingness to help, and accessibility, among other aspects. Several students mentioned specific professors as the "best part of UAS," and others expressed concern about particular faculty members leaving. It is also important to point out that a significant number of students expressed dissatisfaction with certain faculty members. UAS should consider faculty retention a key part of student retention, and should focus these retention efforts on those faculty members that are the most effective at their jobs.

#7: Be strategic in retention efforts; not all students *should* complete their degrees at UAS. Create an additional method for measuring student retention.

An important point was made by several staff and faculty interviewees: student retention rates do not tell the whole story of student retention. In fact, they can be misleading. UAS enrolls a number of students who never plan on completing their degree at UAS, and this is the right path for them: they want a degree not available at UAS, they have a strong desire to get out of their hometown, or they just need a particular skill set before moving on in their careers. For many of these students, UAS delivers a valuable product that does

not include graduation. UAS should be strategic in its retention efforts, and focus on the students who have a good chance of completing their degrees but simply need a boost: for example, better advising, a more convenient class schedule, more engagement in campus life, or a shorter time-frame for graduation.

A related recommendation is to adopt an additional method of measuring student retention. While it is necessary to retain measures designed to meet statewide or nationwide standards that tend to focus on full-time or degree-seeking students, there should be an additional method that recognizes UAS' unique position in serving the needs of a wide variety of students. For example, the additional retention rate could measure retention of students that truly intend to obtain a UAS degree when they first enroll. This could be determined when a student first registers for classes. Perhaps advisors could record their advisees' goals, then follow up on whether those goals were met and whether the student stayed or left. An annual survey that measures student satisfaction ratings, intention to transfer/withdraw, etc. is another potential strategy. UAS should be able to demonstrate its effectiveness in ways in addition to standard retention rates.

#8: Insure that financial aid and scholarship programs are maximizing student retention.

One-third of students who withdrew from UAS without completing their degree cited financial reasons. In addition, financial aid was one of the most common themes among suggestions by survey respondents in how to retain more students. UAS is encouraged to examine their financial aid and scholarship programs with student retention in mind: Should aid packages be spread out among more students? Is financial aid currently awarded where it is not needed? Could these students who withdraw be incentivized with financial aid programs? Although UAS is known for its affordability, there are clearly some students for whom tuition remains a significant challenge.

#9: In recruiting students, target markets that are the most likely to attain their degree at UAS.

Clearly UAS should continue its open-enrollment policy and should encourage *all* students, regardless of background, to attend. It also should continue its recruitment of, and service to, students who have more limited goals (like fulfilling their GERs). But there may be specific markets with a high likelihood of graduation that UAS could target more strategically, leading to higher retention. UAS maintains extensive databases on its students: demographics, transfer vs. non-transfer, field of study, Alaska Scholars, etc., along with whether these students are completing their degrees. This information should be incorporated into UAS' recruiting strategies (if it is not already).

A related idea is to target students interested in the major degree programs that UAS offers. A major reason for students transferring to other schools is that their desired program is not offered at UAS. Focusing on those prospects interested in UAS' leading programs will have a positive effect on student retention in the longer term.

Introduction and Methodology

Introduction

Like many open-enrollment universities, the University of Alaska Southeast struggles with student retention. A wide variety of factors contribute to students transferring or withdrawing from UAS before obtaining their degree: program availability, academic struggles, personal issues, and the desire to leave one's hometown, among others. While UAS administration is aware of the challenges facing students, the full spectrum of retention factors was not known, nor how important each factor was – and, most importantly, the best strategies for increasing retention in the future. To explore these and other issues, UAS contracted with McDowell Group, a Juneau-based research and consulting firm, to conduct a *Student Retention Study* in the spring of 2009. A similar study was conducted by McDowell Group in 1999.

Methodology

Survey of Current Students

An online survey of current students was conducted in April 2009. The survey was designed by McDowell Group in cooperation with UAS staff, and included questions on reasons for attending UAS, satisfaction, plans for transferring/withdrawing, academic preparedness, and suggestions for retaining more students, among others. To qualify for the survey, students had to be taking six or more credits. Students who were in the “professional education” category were screened out of the survey; these are students mostly from the Anchorage area who take distance classes only to keep their teaching credentials current.

Postcards and emails with a link to the survey were sent to all 1,351 qualified students, with one reminder email sent a week after the survey launch. An incentive was offered to help generate responses: three survey respondents were randomly selected to win their choice of 10,000 Alaska Airlines miles or a \$250 Amazon.com gift certificate. After deleting duplicate and incomplete surveys, the sample totaled 575 respondents. At 43 percent of qualified students, the response rate was higher than anticipated.

Because students provided their names and date of birth at the end of the survey, the study team was able to match up their survey with their student record, allowing for cross-tab analysis by gender, age, full-time/part-time status, campus, school, class, and whether the student originated from within Alaska or from outside the state.

Survey results were compared to the (qualified) student population to ensure that self-selection bias did not occur. The distribution of survey respondents across the various sub-groups closely matched the actual student population. The number and percentage of respondents by sub-group is provided at the end of the Survey of Current Students chapter.

With a sample size of 575, the maximum margin of error for the total sample is ± 3.1 percent. The margin of error increases for sub-groups as sample sizes get smaller. A copy of the survey instrument is attached.

Survey of Transferred/Withdrawn Students

The survey of transferred and withdrawn students was also conducted in April 2009, and was designed by the study team in cooperation with UAS staff. The survey asked respondents their satisfaction with UAS, reasons for transferring/withdrawing, and continued education, among other subjects. Two lists were used to reach respondents: one of students who left UAS in the previous three years and enrolled at another university, the second of students who left UAS in the previous three years and did *not* enroll elsewhere.

Because the contact information of the former students was (expectedly) outdated, the study team utilized both online and telephone methods to reach respondents. A total of 192 surveys of former students were completed (76 surveys were completed via telephone and 116 were completed online by former students who received an e-mail invitation to participate in the survey). The number of responses was higher than anticipated, considering the transient nature of many former students as well as the fact that former students have less reason to participate in such a project. The same incentive of a prize drawing for 10,000 Alaska Airlines miles or a \$250 Amazon.com gift certificate was utilized.

A copy of the survey instrument is attached.

Discussion Groups

Two 90-minute discussion groups were held with UAS students in mid-April: one of eight freshmen, the other of nine juniors. The study team recruited respondents via telephone. Students were given a \$25 honorarium for participating. Discussion topics included satisfaction with the University, plans and reasons for transferring/withdrawing, comparison of UAS with other universities (for transfer students), academic preparedness, and suggestions for improving the Universities retention rate. The participants represented a wide range of the student population, including ethnicity, town/state of origin, transfers vs. non-transfers, and field of study.

Executive Interviews

The study team interviewed 11 staff and faculty members knowledgeable about student retention. Areas of expertise represented by the contacts included student activities, student services, Native students, advising, registration, and various educational disciplines covering both undergraduate and graduate students. Ten of the 11 interviewed were on the Juneau campus. While their names will be kept confidential, the study team thanks the participating staff and faculty for their valuable contribution.

Survey of Current Students

Following are the results of the online survey of current UAS students. All students registered for six or more credits received the survey; of these 1,351 students, 575 (43 percent) responded. Results are presented in terms of the total sample, full-time students, and part-time students.

Satisfaction

Overall Satisfaction

UAS students express high levels of satisfaction with their overall education experience, with four out of five satisfied and only 3 percent dissatisfied.

- Eighty-two percent of students were satisfied or very satisfied with their overall educational experience. Only 3 percent were dissatisfied, and less than 1 percent were very dissatisfied. The remainder (15 percent) were neutral.
- Part-time students tended to be slightly more satisfied than full-time students, with 41 percent very satisfied, compared to 30 percent of full-time students.

Overall, how satisfied are you with your UAS educational experience?

	All Students n=574	Full-Time Students n=296	Part-Time Students n=278
Very satisfied	35%	30%	41%
Satisfied	47	50	45
Neutral	15	16	13
Dissatisfied	3	4	2
Very dissatisfied	<1	<1	-

- Satisfaction was generally consistent among the various sub-groups. Following are satisfaction rates (satisfied plus very satisfied) by sub-group. Three groups showed statistically significant differences: age (those over 40 were slightly more satisfied), school (those in the School of Education were slightly more satisfied), and class (graduate students were slightly more satisfied).
 - AGE - Under 25: 80 percent; 25 to 39: 81 percent; 40 and over: 91 percent.
 - SCHOOL - Arts and Sciences: 79 percent; Management: 83 percent; Education: 89 percent.
 - CLASS - Freshmen: 79 percent; Sophomores/Juniors: 84 percent; Seniors: 80 percent; Graduate students: 87 percent; Non-degree seeking students: 80 percent.
 - CAMPUS - Juneau: 82 percent; Ketchikan/Sitka: 83 percent. (Note: the Ketchikan and Sitka samples were combined because their individual sample sizes were too small for analysis.)
 - GENDER - Male: 83 percent; Female: 82 percent.
 - ORIGIN AT ENTRY - In-State: 82 percent; Out-of-State: 81 percent.

- As might be expected, students who said they were likely to withdraw or transfer (asked later in the survey) reported lower satisfaction ratings than those who were unlikely to withdraw or transfer. It is interesting to note, however, that even among those planning to leave UAS, over two-thirds (69 percent) were satisfied, and only 12 percent were dissatisfied.

**Overall, how satisfied are you with your UAS educational experience?
Base: Enrolled in a degree program**

	Likely to Withdraw/ Transfer n=68	Unlikely to Withdraw/ Transfer n=400
Very satisfied	17%	39%
Satisfied	52	46
Neutral	18	14
Dissatisfied	11	1
Very dissatisfied	1	-

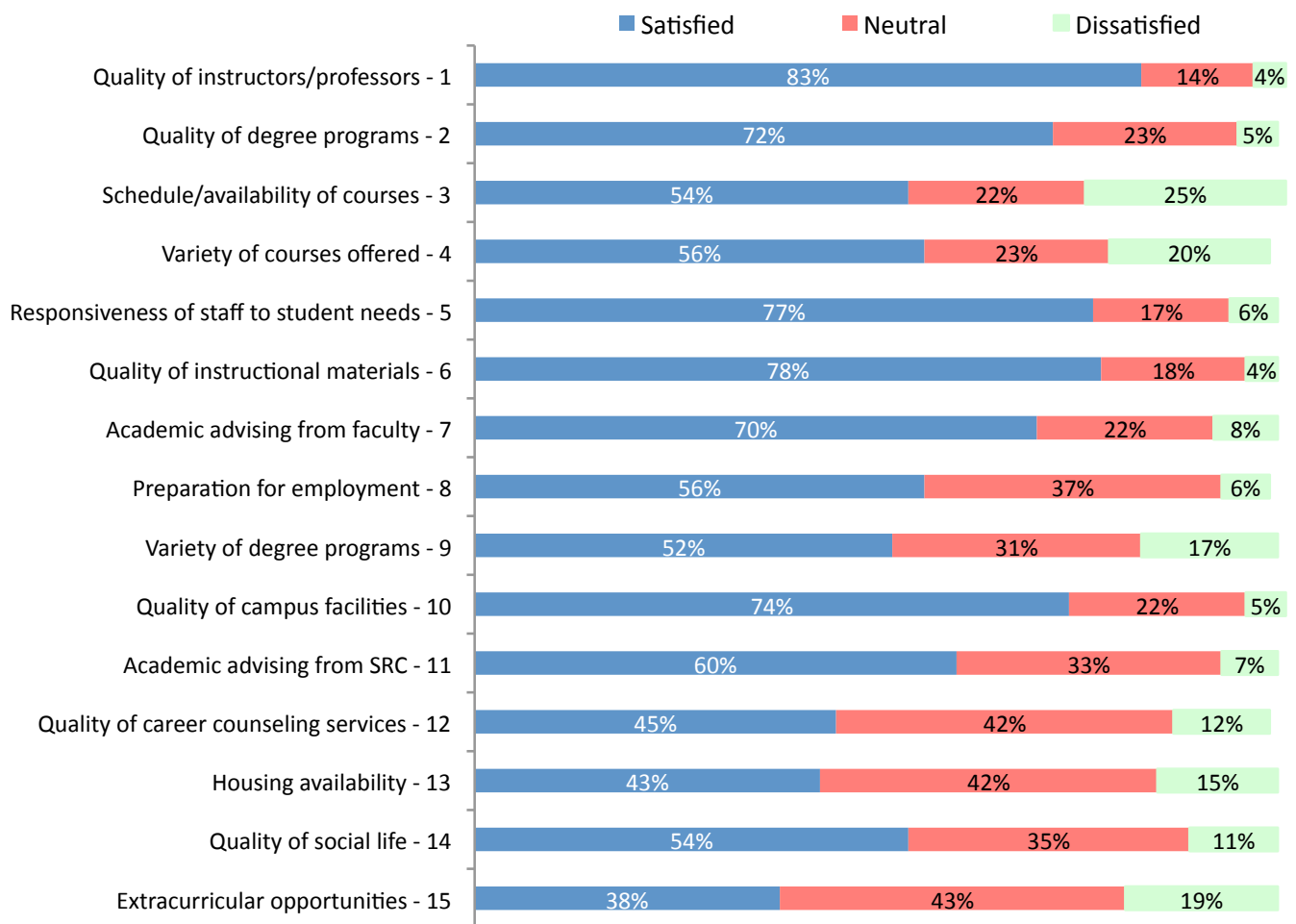
- Students who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied were asked to explain. Since only 18 students identified themselves as dissatisfied, the responses were not coded. Several of the complaints were about lack of class availability and poor class scheduling. Another theme was faculty: a number of students complained about specific instructors not being qualified, or commented that the overall level of instruction was poor. Other complaints referred to disorganization, poor financial advising, and specific classes that did not meet expectations.

Satisfaction with Specific Areas: Summary Results

The top-rated aspect of UAS is the quality of instructors/professors, while the lowest-rated aspect is the schedule/availability of courses.

- The top-rated aspects of UAS were: quality of instructors/professors (83 percent satisfied); quality of instructional materials (78 percent satisfied); and overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs (77 percent satisfied). Only 4 to 6 percent were dissatisfied with these categories.
- The categories receiving the most dissatisfied ratings were schedule/availability of courses offered (25 percent dissatisfied); variety of courses offered (20 percent dissatisfied); and extracurricular opportunities (19 percent dissatisfied).
- A number of categories garnered large percentages of “neutral” responses. It is likely that many of these responses were due to the respondent not using that service; for example, 42 percent were neutral on housing availability. Although there was an option for “Don’t know/do not use,” it appears that many students used the “neutral” response instead.

Satisfaction with Specific Areas: Summary Results Ranked in Order of Importance¹



¹ Importance ranking based on percentage of students identifying each aspect as “very important.”

Notes: Rows may not add to 100 percent due to rounding. Students responding “Don’t know/do not use” were removed from the base for each question.

Satisfaction with Specific Areas: Detailed Results

Note: In the tables on the following pages, students who responded “Don’t know/do not use” in any individual category were removed from that base sample so categories could be compared with each other. The percentage of the total sample who chose this response is provided in italics as supplemental information. For this reason, the columns only add to 100 percent if the italicized numbers are excluded.

Satisfaction with specific aspects of UAS tends to be higher among: part-time students, School of Education students, graduate students, and students over 40. Those who say they are planning to transfer or withdraw are less satisfied with every aspect, particularly course availability and variety.

- Instructors/professors garnered the most *very* satisfied ratings (36 percent), followed by staff responsiveness (30 percent), and academic advising from faculty (29 percent).
- Statistically significant differences appear between full-time and part-time students for most categories. In general, part-time students gave higher satisfaction ratings.
 - Part-time students were more satisfied than full-time students with the variety of courses offered (64 vs. 51 percent satisfied or very satisfied); the schedule/availability of courses offered (60 vs. 47 percent); the variety of degree programs (58 vs. 46 percent); the quality of instructional materials (83 vs. 73 percent); and the overall responsiveness of staff (83 vs. 72 percent).
 - Full-time students were more satisfied than part-time students with the quality of social life (60 vs. 46 percent satisfied or very satisfied) and extracurricular opportunities (41 vs. 32 percent).
- Those who were likely to transfer or withdraw from UAS gave lower satisfaction ratings in virtually all categories. The categories with the widest differences compared to other students included variety of courses (37 vs. 61 percent satisfied or very satisfied); schedule/availability of courses (39 vs. 56 percent); quality of degree programs (59 vs. 75 percent); and preparation for employment (41 vs. 60 percent).
- Other statistically significant differences by subgroup include:
 - Students under 25 were less satisfied than older students with variety of courses offered, schedule/availability of courses offered, variety of degree programs, and preparation for employment. Students under 25 were more satisfied with the quality of social life. Those over 40 were more satisfied than younger students with quality of degree programs and academic advising from faculty.
 - Students in the School of Education gave higher satisfaction ratings than the other two schools in several categories, including schedule/availability of courses, quality of degree programs, quality of career counseling services, academic advising from faculty, and preparation for employment. Students in the School of Arts and Sciences gave lower satisfaction ratings than the other two schools to variety of courses offered and the variety of degree programs.
 - Graduate students gave higher satisfaction ratings to variety of courses, schedule/availability of courses, quality of degree programs, variety of degree programs, and preparation for employment.

*How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your UAS experience?
(In descending order based on “very satisfied” rating)*

	All Students	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students
Quality of instructors/professors	n=571	n=294	n=277
Very satisfied	36%	34%	37%
Satisfied	47	46	48
Neutral	14	16	12
Dissatisfied	3	3	3
Very dissatisfied	1	1	<1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	1	<1
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	n=568	n=296	n=272
Very satisfied	30%	28%	33%
Satisfied	47	44	50
Neutral	17	21	13
Dissatisfied	4	6	3
Very dissatisfied	2	1	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	-	2.2
Academic advising from faculty	n=533	n=276	n=257
Very satisfied	29%	30%	28%
Satisfied	41	41	42
Neutral	22	20	23
Dissatisfied	5	6	4
Very dissatisfied	3	3	4
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	7	7	8
Quality of degree programs	n=556	n=289	n=267
Very satisfied	23%	20%	27%
Satisfied	49	50	48
Neutral	23	25	21
Dissatisfied	4	5	3
Very dissatisfied	1	<1	1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	3	2	4
Academic advising from Student Resources Center	n=389	n=216	n=173
Very satisfied	22%	23%	21%
Satisfied	38	36	40
Neutral	33	34	32
Dissatisfied	5	6	5
Very dissatisfied	2	2	1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	32	27	38

Table continued

	All Students	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students
Quality of campus facilities	n=453	n=261	n=192
Very satisfied	20%	20%	19%
Satisfied	54	55	52
Neutral	22	20	26
Dissatisfied	4	5	3
Very dissatisfied	1	<1	1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	21	12	31
Quality of instructional materials	n=565	n=293	n=272
Very satisfied	19%	15%	23%
Satisfied	59	58	60
Neutral	18	20	15
Dissatisfied	4	6	3
Very dissatisfied	<1	1	-
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	2	1	2
Housing availability	n=292	n=193	n=99
Very satisfied	17%	23%	5%
Satisfied	26	28	22
Neutral	42	34	57
Dissatisfied	10	10	9
Very dissatisfied	5	4	7
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	49	35	64
Preparation for employment	n=474	n=260	n=214
Very satisfied	17%	17%	17%
Satisfied	39	37	42
Neutral	37	38	36
Dissatisfied	5	7	2
Very dissatisfied	1	1	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	17	12	23
Quality of career counseling services	n=354	n=200	n=154
Very satisfied	15%	19%	11%
Satisfied	30	30	31
Neutral	42	40	46
Dissatisfied	8	8	9
Very dissatisfied	4	4	3
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	38	32	45
Variety of courses offered	n=560	n=292	n=268
Very satisfied	14%	12%	18%
Satisfied	42	39	46
Neutral	23	26	20
Dissatisfied	18	21	15
Very dissatisfied	2	3	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	2	1	4

Table continued

	All Students	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students
Quality of social life	n=395	n=243	n=152
Very satisfied	13%	16%	10%
Satisfied	41	44	36
Neutral	35	28	47
Dissatisfied	8	10	5
Very dissatisfied	3	3	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	31	18	45
Schedule/availability of courses offered	n=566	n=293	n=273
Very satisfied	13%	9%	17%
Satisfied	41	38	43
Neutral	22	25	18
Dissatisfied	20	22	17
Very dissatisfied	5	5	4
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	1	2
Variety of degree programs	n=533	n=280	n=253
Very satisfied	13%	11%	15%
Satisfied	39	35	43
Neutral	31	31	30
Dissatisfied	15	19	11
Very dissatisfied	2	3	1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	7	5	9
Extracurricular opportunities	n=352	n=220	n=132
Very satisfied	7%	9%	3%
Satisfied	31	32	29
Neutral	43	40	48
Dissatisfied	14	12	17
Very dissatisfied	5	6	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	39	26	53

Importance of Specific Areas: Summary Results

The aspect rated as most important by students was quality of instructors/professors (also the highest-rated aspect in terms of satisfaction). Considered less important were extracurricular opportunities, quality of social life, and housing availability.

- Following quality of instructors/professors (91 percent very important), the aspects rated as most important were quality of degree programs (81 percent), schedule/availability of courses offered (80 percent), and variety of courses offered (73 percent).
- It is a significant finding that the aspect rated as most important (quality of instructors/professors) also earned the highest satisfaction ratings (83 percent satisfied). Other top-rated aspects in both satisfaction and importance include: quality of degree programs (81 percent very important; 72 percent satisfied), and overall responsiveness of UAS staff (70 percent very important; 77 percent satisfied).
- Several aspects were considered very important, but earned lower satisfaction ratings, particularly schedule/availability of courses (80 percent very important; 54 percent satisfied) and variety of courses offered (73 percent very important; 56 percent satisfied).

Summary Table: Importance of Specific Areas

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Quality of instructors/professors	91%	9%	-%
Quality of degree programs	81	18	1
Schedule/availability of courses offered	80	19	1
Variety of courses offered	73	26	1
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	70	28	2
Quality of instructional materials	67	30	2
Academic advising from faculty	63	34	3
Preparation for employment	62	33	5
Variety of degree programs	54	39	7
Quality of campus facilities	43	49	8
Academic advising from Student Resources Center	37	48	15
Quality of career counseling services	35	48	17
Housing availability	34	37	29
Quality of social life	25	42	33
Extracurricular opportunities	20	50	30

Note: Those responding "Don't know/do not use" were removed from the base. Rows may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Importance of Specific Areas: Detailed Results

Note: In the tables on the following pages, students who responded “Don’t know/do not use” in any individual category were removed from that base sample so categories could be effectively compared with each other. The percentage of the total sample who chose this response is provided in italics as supplemental information. For this reason, the columns only add to 100 percent if the italicized numbers are excluded.

- There were statistically significant differences between part-time and full-time students in several categories.
 - Part-time students rated two aspects as more important than full-time students: schedule/availability of courses (85 vs. 76 very important) and the quality of instructional materials (74 vs. 61 percent).
 - Full-time students rated the following aspects as more important than part-time students: quality of campus facilities (48 vs. 35 percent very important); quality of social life (29 vs. 19 percent); housing availability (40 vs. 23 percent); and extracurricular opportunities (25 vs. 12 percent);
- Those who were likely to transfer or withdraw from UAS gave higher importance ratings in several categories, including variety of courses (82 vs. 70 percent very important); variety of degree programs (72 vs. 50 percent); quality of campus facilities (51 vs. 41 percent); and academic advising from the Student Resources Center (47 vs. 35 percent).
- Other statistically significant differences by subgroup include:
 - By class, seniors considered the variety of courses as more important than other classes. Freshmen placed more importance on the quality of campus facilities, housing availability, extracurricular opportunities, and academic advising from the Student Resources Center.
 - Those under 25 considered the quality of career counseling, the quality of instructional materials, and the responsiveness of UAS staff as less important than older students. They considered the quality of social life, housing availability, and extracurricular opportunities as more important.
 - Women gave higher importance ratings than men in nearly all categories, with the biggest differences in schedule/availability of courses and academic advising from faculty. Two exceptions where men gave higher importance ratings were quality of social life and extracurricular opportunities.
 - Ketchikan/Sitka students considered the variety of degree programs, the quality of career counseling, and the quality of instructional materials as more important than Juneau students. Juneau students placed more importance on housing availability.
 - Those from out-of-state considered housing availability, extracurricular opportunities, and the quality of campus facilities as more important compared to in-state students.

**How important are each of the following aspects to your UAS experience?
(In descending order based on “very important” rating)**

	All Students	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students
Quality of instructors/professors	n=572	n=296	n=276
Very important	91%	91%	92%
Somewhat important	9	9	8
Not important	-	-	-
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	-	1
Quality of degree programs	n=556	n=291	n=265
Very important	81%	79%	83%
Somewhat important	18	20	16
Not important	1	1	<1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	3	2	5
Schedule/availability of courses offered	n=566	n=292	n=274
Very important	80%	76%	85%
Somewhat important	19	23	15
Not important	1	1	<1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	1	1
Variety of courses offered	n=561	n=289	n=272
Very important	73%	73%	72%
Somewhat important	26	26	26
Not important	1	1	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	2	2	2
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	n=564	n=293	n=271
Very important	70%	69%	72%
Somewhat important	28	29	27
Not important	2	2	1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	2	1	3
Quality of instructional materials	n=569	n=294	n=275
Very important	67%	61%	74%
Somewhat important	30	35	25
Not important	2	4	<1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	1	1
Academic advising from faculty	n=544	n=286	n=258
Very important	63%	61%	64%
Somewhat important	34	35	33
Not important	3	4	3
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	5	3	7
Preparation for employment	n=518	n=283	n=235
Very important	62%	59%	65%
Somewhat important	33	36	30
Not important	5	5	5
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	10	4	16

Table continued

	All Students	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students
Variety of degree programs	n=539	n=280	n=259
Very important	54%	55%	53%
Somewhat important	39	38	40
Not important	7	7	7
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	6	5	7
Quality of campus facilities	n=458	n=266	n=192
Very important	43%	48%	35%
Somewhat important	49	45	55
Not important	8	6	10
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	20	10	31
Academic advising from Student Resources Center	n=431	n=235	n=196
Very important	37%	37%	37%
Somewhat important	48	47	48
Not important	15	15	14
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	25	21	30
Quality of career counseling services	n=429	n=237	n=192
Very important	35%	34%	38%
Somewhat important	48	52	43
Not important	17	14	19
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	25	20	31
Housing availability	n=300	n=196	n=104
Very important	34%	40%	23%
Somewhat important	37	38	35
Not important	29	22	42
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	48	34	63
Quality of social life	n=412	n=247	n=165
Very important	25%	29%	19%
Somewhat important	42	43	42
Not important	33	28	39
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	28	17	41
Extracurricular opportunities	n=390	n=236	n=154
Very important	20%	25%	12%
Somewhat important	50	50	50
Not important	30	24	38
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	67	20	45

UAS Compared to Other Colleges

Two-thirds of UAS students think that the overall quality of education at UAS is as good as or better than similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48, while only 4 percent think that the quality is worse.

- When asked how UAS compared to similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48, UAS students responded favorably, with 24 percent saying it was better. The most common response was that it was about the same (43 percent). Three out of ten respondents said they didn't know.
- Responses were fairly consistent across sub-groups, with a few exceptions. Students in the schools of Arts and Sciences and Education were slightly more likely to say UAS was better, at 25 and 29 percent, respectively, compared to 18 percent of School of Management students. Students likely to transfer were less likely to say UAS was better (16 vs. 26 percent of other students), and more likely to say it was worse (8 vs. 3 percent).

In terms of overall quality of education, how do you think UAS compares to similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48?

	All Students n=574	Full-Time Students n=296	Part-Time Students n=278
Better	24%	25%	23%
About the same	43	41	44
Worse	4	4	4
Don't know	29	30	29

Likes and Dislikes

When asked what they liked best about UAS, the most common responses referred to faculty and staff: their knowledge, accessibility, helpfulness, and the close connection students feel with them. When asked what they liked least about UAS, the most common complaints referred to course availability and scheduling.

Because these were open-ended questions ("What do you like most about UAS?" and "What do you like least about UAS?"), responses were grouped into themes, outlined below.

What do you like most about UAS?

- The greatest number of responses referred to faculty and staff. Students expressed appreciation for a few aspects in particular:
 - The ability to connect with faculty and staff; their accessibility and friendliness.
 - The willingness of faculty and staff to help students with any problems that arise; the interest they take in students.
 - Instructors' high level of knowledge and teaching skills.

- A significant number of responses referred to the small campus, the small class size, and the resulting sense of community at UAS. The campus was seen as a welcoming and friendly place to go to school. Many students appreciated the overall atmosphere.
- Another common theme among students' favorite aspects of UAS was online/distance programs and courses. In fact, "distance programs/courses/degrees" was mentioned by 71 respondents (in addition to a number of more detailed responses referring to the distance program). Students greatly appreciated the flexibility that online courses afforded them: being able to attend classes from home, have a job, live in another location, etc. They also appreciated the quality of the online classes.
- The location of UAS (whether in Juneau, Ketchikan, or Sitka) was often cited as a favorite aspect; students appreciated that they were able to attend school close to home, in a beautiful setting with plenty of outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Finally, a number of students expressed appreciation for the low tuition at UAS.

What do you like most about UAS? (Common themes)

	# of Responses
Faculty/staff	218
Small campus/classes; sense of community	190
Online/distance programs/courses	135
Beautiful/convenient location/campus; facilities	52
Cost and financing	36

What do you like least about UAS?

- The greatest number of complaints about UAS centered on course availability and scheduling. There were several areas of concern:
 - Inconvenient and conflicting class times; not enough courses offered at certain times of the day.
 - Not enough courses offered every semester; the need to postpone graduation because of limited course offerings.
 - Not enough variety of courses offered.
 - Classes not offered as promised; classes cancelled at the last minute.
- Students made a number of comments about faculty: specific professors or departments, the overall level of teaching, lack of responsiveness by professors, and lack of engagement by professors, among other areas. Complaints about staff referred to excessive bureaucracy, lack of organization, and miscommunication, for example.
- A number of students complained about the lack of degrees available at UAS. Several said they had no choice but to transfer because their desired degree program wasn't available.

- Distance delivery was an area mentioned by a number of students. While some felt there should be more online classes offered, a greater number wanted less reliance on the distance model.
- There were several complaints about tuition costs, student fees, and the financial aid office. For example, some students objected to how student fees were spent.
- Frustration with technology was expressed by a handful of students, including problems with distance delivery, lack of adequate computers available to students, and complaints about the IT department.
- Academic advising was mentioned by a number of students. Students complained about both the lack of advising they received and the poor quality of the advising that is available.
- Other areas of complaints included student housing, cafeteria, and the library.

What do you like least about UAS? (Common themes)

	# of Responses
Course availability and scheduling	157
Faculty/staff	106
Specific classes/programs/distance delivery	35
Cost/financing	34
Degree availability	30
Technology	22
Academic advising	19

Academic Preparedness

Four out of five students felt academically prepared when they started classes at UAS. Among those who felt unprepared, math was by far the most common area of concern.

- One-third of students felt very prepared academically when they started classes at UAS, and another 46 percent felt prepared. Seventeen percent felt either unprepared or very unprepared.
- There were several differences in responses among sub-groups:
 - Students at the Juneau campus felt more prepared than those at other campuses (82 vs. 69 percent prepared or very prepared).
 - Students in the School of Arts and Sciences were twice as likely to feel unprepared (21 percent vs. 11 percent of School of Management students and 9 percent of Education students).
 - Graduate students felt the most prepared at 94 percent, followed by seniors at 85 percent, sophomore/juniors and freshmen at 75 percent, and non-degree seeking students at 72 percent.
 - Women felt slightly more prepared than men (83 vs. 75 percent).
 - Out-of-state (at entry) students felt more prepared than in-state students (91 vs. 78 percent)

How prepared were you academically when you started classes at UAS?

	All Students N=574	Full-Time Students N=296	Part-Time Students N=278
Very prepared	34%	33%	35%
Prepared	46	47	45
Unprepared	14	16	12
Very unprepared	3	2	4
Don't know	3	2	4

- The most common subject where students felt unprepared was math, mentioned by 71 percent of those who said they were unprepared academically. English/writing and study skills were each mentioned by nearly half of respondents; 31 percent mentioned science, and 19 percent mentioned computer skills. “Other” subjects mentioned by respondents included financial skills, how to be a student, navigating college, and organization.
- Full-time students were more likely to feel unprepared in math. Small sample sizes prevent further sub-group analysis.

In which areas did you feel unprepared?
Base: Unprepared or Very Unprepared

	All Students N=97	Full-Time Students N=53	Part-Time Students N=44
Math	71%	79%	61%
English/writing	47	49	45
Study skills	44	49	39
Science	31	30	32
Computer skills	19	19	18
Other	9	8	11

Reasons for Attending UAS

The most common reasons for attending UAS were low tuition cost, Alaska location/beautiful campus, and could live at home. When asked for the most important reason, the number one response was could live at home.

- The top three reasons given by students for attending UAS were low tuition cost (41 percent), Alaska location/beautiful campus (38 percent), and could live at home (36 percent).
- Full-time students differed from part-time students on several responses. They were more likely to mention tuition cost (51 vs. 31 percent), Alaska location/beautiful campus (49 vs. 26 percent), small campus (41 vs. 23 percent), and inexpensive method for completing requirements (27 vs. 18 percent). Part-time students were much more likely than full-time students to mention online/distance courses (21 vs. 6 percent).
- Additional differences in responses among sub-groups:
 - Those under 25 years old were much more likely to mention low tuition cost, Alaska location/beautiful campus, small campus, inexpensive method for completing requirements, and recommendation by friends or family. Older respondents were more likely to mention online/distance courses and requirement for work/job training.
 - School of Arts and Sciences students were much more likely to mention low tuition cost, Alaska location/beautiful campus, small campus, and inexpensive method for completing requirements. Department of Education students were more likely to mention reputation of degree programs.

Why did you choose to attend UAS?

	All Students N=574	Full-Time Students N=296	Part-Time Students N=278
Low tuition cost	41%	51%	31%
Alaska location, beautiful campus	38	49	26
Could live at home	36	34	38
Small campus	32	41	23
Inexpensive method for completing undergraduate general requirements	23	27	18
It's the only option in Juneau/Ketchikan/Sitka	21	20	22
Recommendation by friends or family	18	21	16
Reputation of degree programs	17	19	15
Access to financing or scholarship	16	18	14
Open enrollment	16	16	16
Offered online/distance courses	13	6	21
Requirement for work/job training	8	7	9
Specific program/class	5	6	4
Recommendation by high school teacher/counselor/coach	5	5	4
Other	4	3	6

- When asked for their most important reason for attending UAS, responses were fairly spread out, with the most popular reasons being could live at home, low tuition cost, and online/distance courses.
- Full-time students were more likely than part-time students to cite low tuition cost, Alaska location/beautiful campus, and inexpensive method for completing requirements. Part-time students were more likely to cite online/distance courses and only option in Juneau/Ketchikan/Sitka.

Which of these was the most important reason you chose to attend UAS?

	All Students N=572	Full-Time Students N=296	Part-Time Students N=276
Could live at home	16%	14%	17%
Low tuition cost	14	17	11
Offered online/distance courses	13	6	20
Alaska location, beautiful campus	11	17	4
It's the only option in Juneau/Ketchikan/Sitka	11	8	14
Reputation of degree programs	5	6	5
Inexpensive method for completing undergraduate general requirements	5	7	3
Small campus	4	5	3
Requirement for work/job training	4	3	4
Access to financing or scholarship	4	3	4
Specific program/class	4	5	3
Recommendation by friends or family	3	4	3
Open enrollment	1	1	2
Recruited by UAS representative	1	1	1
Recommendation by high school teacher/counselor/coach	1	1	1
Other	4	3	5

Transferring from UAS

- Before being asked about their plans to transfer or withdraw from UAS, students were asked if they were enrolled in a degree program. Nearly nine out of ten students were enrolled in a degree program.

Are you enrolled in a degree program at UAS?

	All Students n=574	Full-Time Students n=296	Part-Time Students n=278
Yes	88%	93%	83%
No	12	7	17

One out of five students currently enrolled in a degree program are likely to transfer to a different school before completing their degree. Full-time students are twice as likely as part-time students to say they will transfer.

- Eighteen percent of UAS students said they were likely or very likely to transfer before completing their degree, including 24 percent of full-time students and 11 percent of part-time students.
- Statistically significant differences in responses appeared in several sub-groups:
 - Those under 25 were the most likely to transfer: 28 percent likely or very likely, vs. 11 percent of those 25 to 39 and 7 percent of those over 40.
 - Ketchikan/Sitka campus students were more likely to plan on transferring (24 vs. 17 percent of Juneau students).
 - School of Arts and Sciences students were more likely to plan on transferring at 24 percent, compared to 11 percent of School of Management students and 9 percent of School of Education students.
 - Freshmen were more likely to plan on transferring at 37 percent, compared 21 percent of sophomore/juniors, 8 percent of seniors, and 2 percent of graduate students.
- A detailed profile of students very unlikely to transfer or withdraw from UAS is provided on the following page.

How likely are you to transfer from UAS to a different school before completing your degree?

Base: Enrolled in degree program

	All Students n=505	Full-Time Students n=275	Part-Time Students n=230
Very likely	10%	13%	6%
Likely	8	11	5
Unlikely	21	20	23
Very unlikely	52	49	57
Don't know	8	7	9

- Students who are very unlikely to withdraw or transfer from UAS are equally split between full-time and part-time; report an average age of 31 years; and are more likely to be seniors and graduate students.

Detailed Profile of Students Very Unlikely to Transfer or Withdraw

Very Unlikely to Transfer/Withdraw n=239	
Full-Time vs. Part-Time	
Full-time	53%
Part-time	47
Age	
Under 18	<1%
18 – 24	37
25 – 29	22
30 – 39	21
40 – 49	13
50 and over	8
Average age	31.1
Class	
Non-degree seeking	4%
High school	-
Freshman	10
Sophomore	12
Junior	13
Senior	32
Graduate student	26
School	
School of Arts & Sciences	36%
School of Education	28
School of Management	25
School of Career Education	7
Non-degree seeking	4
Origin at Time of Entry	
In-state	79%
Out-of-state	21
Gender	
Female	73%
Male	27

Students likely to transfer cite four common reasons: desired courses not offered, degree program not offered, want school with more classes available, and want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska.

- A related reason to “want school with more classes available” is better course scheduling elsewhere, mentioned by 31 percent of likely-to-transfer students. Personal/family reasons was also a significant factor, mentioned by 24 percent of respondents.
- Factors mentioned by fewer than 20 percent of respondents included want school with more people; want school with better reputation, and faculty is better elsewhere.
- The small sample of students likely to transfer prevents analysis by sub-group.

Why do you plan to transfer from UAS?
Base: Enrolled in degree program; likely or very likely to transfer

	All Students n=91	Full-Time Students n=66	Part-Time Students n=25
Desired courses not offered at UAS	54%	53%	58%
Degree program not offered at UAS	48	44	58
Want school with more classes available	48	47	50
Want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska	47	47	46
Better course scheduling elsewhere	31	33	25
Personal/family reasons	24	27	17
Want school with more people	17	18	13
Want school with better reputation	11	11	13
Faculty is better elsewhere	10	11	8
Other	10	12	4
Don't know	1	2	-

Note: Due to the small sample size of part-time students, their results should be seen as general indicators only.

When all students were asked why other students transfer, the most common reasons cited were want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska and degree program not offered at UAS.

- Comparing the responses of all students to only those who plan to transfer, the responses were generally similar, with one exception: the overall student sample were more likely to cite the desire to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska.
- In general, full-time students cited more reasons for students wanting to transfer than part-time students.
- Students under 25 cited all reasons for transferring at a much higher rate than older students. For example, 56 percent of those under 25 mentioned want school with more classes available, compared to 35 percent of those 25 to 40 and 32 percent of those over 40. Older students were much more likely to respond with “don’t know.”

What do you think are the main reasons other students at UAS transfer to other schools?

	All Students N=573	Full-Time Students N=296	Part-Time Students N=277
Want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska	64%	70%	58%
Degree program not offered at UAS	63	70	56
Desired courses not offered at UAS	55	61	48
Want school with more classes available	44	52	35
Want school with more people	30	37	22
Personal/family reasons	29	29	29
Better course scheduling elsewhere	28	33	23
Want school with better reputation	18	22	14
Faculty is better elsewhere	10	13	8
Financial reasons	1	<1	1
Social reasons/campus life	1	1	1
Other	3	4	3
Don't know	12	9	15

Withdrawing from UAS

Only a fraction of students pursuing a degree said they were likely to withdraw from UAS before completing their degree.

- Students who were enrolled in a degree program and said they were unlikely to transfer were asked the likelihood of withdrawing. Only 3 percent of these students said they were likely to withdraw. Applied to the total sample of students in a degree program, that figure changes to 2 percent.
- Among the 10 students who said they were likely to withdraw, four cited financial reasons, four cited personal/family reasons, three cited schedule/too busy to attend classes, two said they were burned out/lost interest, two were not satisfied with the quality of classes/instructors, and one was moving from Juneau. (Multiple responses were allowed.)

How likely are you to withdraw from UAS (without transferring to another school) before completing your degree?

Base: Enrolled in degree program; unlikely to transfer

	All Students n=414	Full-Time Students n=209	Part-Time Students n=205
Very likely	1%	<1%	1%
Likely	2	2	1
Unlikely	17	10	24
Very unlikely	75	83	67
Don't know	6	5	7

When all students were asked why other students withdraw from UAS, the most common response was financial reasons, followed by personal/family reasons and schedule/too busy to attend classes.

- Additional reasons mentioned by students included moving from Juneau/Southeast and not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors.
- Students under 25 were much more likely to cite financial reasons.

What do you think are the main reasons other students at UAS withdraw without completing their degree?

	All Students N=572	Full-Time Students N=295	Part-Time Students N=277
Financial reasons	61%	65%	57%
Personal/family reasons	48	51	45
Schedule/too busy to attend classes	44	46	43
Moving from Juneau/Southeast	37	37	36
Not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors	17	19	14
Lack of motivation/not ready	4	4	4
Course availability/scheduling	2	2	1
Lost interest	1	2	1
Other	3	3	2
Don't know	16	14	19

Suggestions for Retaining Students

Common suggestions to UAS for retaining students included: improve class scheduling, stick to the planned course sequence, increase the range of classes offered, add degree programs, and improve academic advising/tutoring.

Most survey participants offered suggestions to UAS for retaining students. They centered around the following themes, and echo the earlier comments around dissatisfaction.

- Course/program availability and class scheduling was a major theme of suggestions, including:
 - Expand class offerings.
 - Improve class scheduling.
 - Offer more online classes.
 - Offer more on campus classes.
 - Expand degree programs.
- Students had a number of suggestions aimed at helping retain students with financial problems: more scholarship opportunities, lower tuition, reduce fees, and make the financial aid process less complicated.

- Academic advising was mentioned frequently in students' suggestions. Most students wanted more and better advising; they suggested that more outreach is needed, and that students would benefit from mandatory advising. Several students also suggested that more mentoring/tutoring would help retain students.
- There were several suggestions regarding professors: to ensure all faculty are qualified and effective teachers, make sure they are connecting with students, and to retain the higher quality faculty.
- Other suggestions referred to student life: child care, more social events and extracurricular activities, and better student housing, for example.

What do you think UAS could do to encourage more students to complete their degrees at UAS? (Common themes)

	# of Responses
Offer more classes and degree programs; improve scheduling	177
Cost/financial aid/scholarships	86
Academic advising/tutoring	71
Faculty and staff	30

Applying to Other Colleges

Three-quarters of UAS students enrolled in a degree program did not apply to any other schools before choosing UAS. Among those that did apply elsewhere, the most common schools were University of Alaska Anchorage and University of Alaska Fairbanks.

- One-quarter of UAS students said they applied to other colleges before selecting UAS. Full-time students were more likely to have applied elsewhere.
- Other sub-groups more likely to have applied elsewhere included: those under 25, Juneau campus students, School of Arts and Sciences students, and students who lived out-of-state at time of entry.

Did you apply to colleges or universities other than UAS (for your current degree program)?
Base: Enrolled in degree program

	All Students n=505	Full-Time Students n=275	Part-Time Students n=230
Yes	26%	31%	20%
No	74	69	80

- Students who applied to colleges other than UAS for their current degree program listed a wide variety of institutions across the US and abroad. Most commonly, they applied to schools in the Western states of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Hawaii, and California. The most popular school was UAA, mentioned by 22 respondents, followed by UAF at 13 responses, Western Washington University at eight responses, and University of Hawaii at seven responses. Other schools receiving four or more responses included University of Oregon, Oregon State University, and University of Washington.

Survey Population Profile

The table below shows how the survey population breaks down by a number of factors: full-time vs. part-time, age, campus, school, class, gender, and origin at time of entry. These results were compared to the actual population surveyed (students enrolled in six or more credits) and found to closely match in nearly all categories. Women were slightly more likely to answer the survey than men, but since very few of their responses showed statistically significant responses, it was decided that data weighting would not be necessary. With such close agreement between the survey and target populations, and a high response rate of 43 percent, the study team believes that the opinions of the survey population are highly representative of the target student population.

Survey Population Profile

	# of Respondents	% of Total
Full-Time vs. Part-Time		
Full-time	296	52%
Part-time	278	48
Age		
Under 18	19	3%
18 – 24	244	43
25 – 29	108	19
30 – 39	109	19
40 – 49	53	9
50 and over	41	7
Average age		29.6
Class		
Non-degree seeking	69	12%
High school	5	1
Freshman	120	21
Sophomore	79	14
Junior	76	13
Senior	129	22
Graduate student	95	17
School		
School of Arts & Sciences	222	39%
School of Education	104	18
School of Management	124	22
School of Career Education	46	8
Non-degree seeking	74	13
Origin at Time of Entry		
In-state	475	83%
Out-of-state	96	17
Gender		
Female	406	71%
Male	168	29

Comparison of Results to Previous Study

McDowell Group conducted a *UAS Student Retention and Market Survey* in 1999 that included several of the same elements as the current study; however, methodological differences prevent direct comparisons in some cases. The survey of 1999 students was conducted via telephone and with full-time students only; the current survey was online and included all students enrolled in six or more credits. (The tables below compare results of full-time students only.) Some questions were modified for clarity, and others were changed to account for the switch of telephone to online methods.

Below are the key points of comparison between the two studies.

- Satisfaction with the overall educational experience at UAS has increased slightly among full-time students since 1999, with those very satisfied increasing from 24 to 30 percent and those dissatisfied dropping from 11 to 4 percent. The increase in “neutral” responses is likely due to the switch from telephone to online surveying.

Overall, how satisfied are you with your UAS educational experience?

	1999 Full-Time Students n=130	2009 Full-Time Students n=296
Very satisfied	24%	30%
Satisfied	56	50
Neutral	9	16
Dissatisfied	11	4
Very dissatisfied	<1	<1

- Students in both surveys were asked to rate individual aspects of UAS. Because different scales were used in each year (see table, next page), results are not directly comparable. However, it is interesting to see how the ratings shifted (or remained the same) in terms of rank. Quality of instructors/professors was the top-rated aspect in both years, while academic advising from faculty and staff responsiveness followed closely behind both years. Quality of degree programs climbed from being the tenth highest-rated aspect to being the fifth highest-rated aspect, while quality of campus facilities climbed from number six to number two.

Rating of Specific Categories
Average rating on 1-to-5 scale and rank

1999: 5 = Excellent; 4 = Good; 3 = Average; 2 = Marginal; 1 = Poor

2009: 5 = Very Satisfied; 4 = Satisfied; 3 = Neutral; 2 = Dissatisfied; 1 = Very Dissatisfied

	1999 Full-Time Students n=130	2009 Full-Time Students n=296
Quality of instructors/professors	4.0 - #1	4.1 - #1
Academic advising from faculty	3.8 - #2	3.9 - #2
Overall responsiveness of staff to student needs	3.8 - #2	3.9 - #2
Quality of instructional materials	3.7 - #4	3.8 - #5
Academic advising from Student Resources Center	3.7 - #4	3.7 - #7
Quality of counseling services (1999)	3.6 - #6	3.5 - #10
Quality of career counseling services (2009)	3.6 - #6	3.5 - #10
Quality of campus facilities	3.6 - #6	3.9 - #2
Housing availability	3.6 - #6	3.6 - #8
Assistance finding employment while in school (1999)	3.5 - #9	3.6 - #8
Preparation for employment (2009)	3.5 - #9	3.6 - #8
Quality of degree programs	3.2 - #10	3.8 - #5
Schedule/availability of courses offered	3.7 - #11	3.2 - #14
Variety of degree programs	2.7 - #12	3.3 - #12
Extracurricular opportunities	2.7 - #12	3.3 - #12
Variety of courses offered	2.6 - #14	3.4 - #11

- Reasons for choosing to attend UAS were requested in both surveys. Some categories of responses were not coded both years (see n/a references, below). Keeping in mind the different methodologies employed, it does appear that several factors have become less important since the last survey was conducted, including low tuition cost, the ability to live at home, inexpensive method for completing requirements, and open enrollment. Among the factors that increased in importance were small campus, recommendation by friends/family, and reputation of degree programs.

Why did you choose to attend UAS?

	1999 Full-Time Students n=130	2009 Full-Time Students N=296
Low tuition cost	65%	51%
Alaska location, beautiful campus	53	49
Could live at home	47	34
Inexpensive method for completing undergraduate general requirements	35	27
Open enrollment	34	16
Small campus	33	41
Access to financing or scholarship	27	18
Hometown/local (1999) It's the only option in Juneau/Ketchikan/Sitka (2009)	15	20
Recommendation by friends or family	12	21
Reputation of degree programs	11	19
Personal contact with UAS representative	10	n/a
Quick response time to inquiries	10	n/a
Publications and brochures received from UAS	5	n/a
Offered online/distance courses	n/a	6
Requirement for work/job training	n/a	7
Specific program/class	n/a	6
Recommendation by high school teacher/counselor/coach	n/a	5
Other	14	3

- Students were asked in both surveys to state their likelihood of leaving UAS. In 1999, the question asked about both transferring and withdrawing, whereas the two concepts were split in 2009. Also, the response options were updated in 2009. It is nonetheless interesting to see that the likelihood of leaving UAS among full-time students appears to have decreased since 1999. Adding together those very likely, somewhat likely, or likely to transfer/withdraw in 1999 results in a total of 37 percent. In 2009, adding together those very likely or likely to transfer (24 percent), *plus* those likely or very likely to withdraw (2 percent) results in a total of 26 percent.

1999: What is the likelihood that you will withdraw or transfer from UAS prior to completing your degree?

2009: How likely are you to transfer from UAS to a different school before completing your degree?

	1999 Full-Time Students n=130		2009 Full-Time Students n=275
Very likely	18%	Very likely	13%
Likely	5	Likely	11
Somewhat likely	14	Unlikely	20
Neutral	16	Very unlikely	49
Not at all likely	46	Don't know	7
Don't know	1	<i>Likely to withdraw</i>	2

Note: The likelihood of withdrawing was asked in a separate question in 2009; the percentage of all degree-enrolled students who said they were likely to withdraw is provided in italics, above.

Survey of Transferred/Withdrawn Students

The survey of transferred/withdrawn students was conducted of 192 former students either over the telephone or online. Over two-thirds of those contacted had withdrawn from UAS, while 32 percent had transferred to another school. All had attended UAS within the last five years.

Did you transfer to another school or withdraw from UAS?

	All Former Students n=192
Withdrew	68%
Transferred	32

Withdrawn Students

When asked why they had withdrawn from UAS, personal/family and financial reasons accounted for the majority of responses. Very few students left UAS because of dissatisfaction.

- Most of the reasons cited by withdrawn students for leaving UAS had to do with personal circumstances: personal/family reasons, financial reasons, busy schedule, work, and moved from area.
- Nearly one-fifth of students left UAS because they burned out or lost interest.
- Only 11 percent of withdrawn students left UAS because they were not satisfied with the quality of classes or instructors.

What are the main reasons you withdrew from UAS?

	Withdrew from UAS n=131
Personal/family reasons	35%
Financial reasons	32
Schedule/too busy to attend classes	21
Moved from Juneau/Southeast	18
Burned out/lost interest	18
Not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors	11
Just taking one class	5
Work	5
Other	14
Don't know	1

Four out of five students who withdrew from UAS were satisfied with the overall quality of education. Satisfaction with individual aspects was also generally high. The lowest-rated categories were variety of degree programs and quality of career counseling services.

- Only 7 percent of students who withdrew from UAS were dissatisfied with the overall quality of education. (This compares to 3 percent among current students.)
- The top-rated aspects of UAS were quality of campus facilities (83 percent satisfied or very satisfied), quality of instructors/professors (79 percent), and quality of instructional materials (78 percent).
- The lowest-rated aspects of UAS were quality of career counseling services (23 percent dissatisfied or very dissatisfied), variety of degree programs (23 percent), variety of courses offered (21 percent), and extracurricular opportunities (21 percent).

How satisfied were you with the following aspects of UAS?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't know/ Did not use
Overall quality of education	22%	58%	12%	5%	2%	-%
Quality of campus facilities	29	54	8	6	2	5
Quality of instructors/professors	26	53	10	8	4	-
Quality of instructional materials	20	58	12	6	4	<1
Quality of degree programs	12	58	15	12	3	10
Quality of social life	21	49	20	8	3	18
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	25	44	20	7	3	4
Academic advising from Student Resources Center	25	42	16	12	6	18
Variety of courses offered	15	50	15	16	5	2
Academic advising from faculty	24	40	19	11	6	15
Schedule/availability of courses offered	16	47	19	15	4	2
Extracurricular opportunities	17	46	16	17	4	28
Variety of degree programs	8	50	18	20	3	9
Quality of career counseling services	19	35	23	13	10	29
Housing availability	13	41	28	9	10	47
Preparation for employment	13	37	32	14	4	30

Notes: Those responding “Don’t know/did not use” were removed from the base. Categories appear in order of satisfaction level (very satisfied + satisfied), with the exception of overall quality of education.

Half of withdrawn students said they were likely to return to UAS to complete a degree. Of those who were unlikely, over half plan to attend a different school.

- About half (52 percent) of withdrawn students were likely to return to UAS to complete a degree, while 39 percent were unlikely and 9 percent said they didn't know.
- Among those unlikely to return to UAS, over half (57 percent) said they were likely or very likely to go to a different school instead. Taken out of the total base of withdrawn students, that figure changes to 22 percent.

How likely are you to return to UAS to complete a degree?

	Withdrew from UAS n=131
Very likely	24%
Likely	28
Unlikely	21
Very unlikely	18
Don't know	9

How likely are you to return to a different school to complete a degree?
Base: Unlikely to return to UAS

	Withdrew from UAS n=51
Very likely	35%
Likely	22
Unlikely	24
Very unlikely	10
Don't know	10

Over half of withdrawn students believe that the quality of education at UAS is as good as or better than similar-sized schools in the Lower 48, while only 13 percent believe it is worse.

- One-quarter of withdrawn students think UAS is better than similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48; 34 percent think it is about the same, and 13 percent think it is worse.
- These figures are only slightly more negative than those of current students, 24 percent of whom said the quality of education was better, 43 percent thought it was about the same, and 4 percent said it was worse.

In terms of overall quality of education, how do you think UAS compares to similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48?

	Withdrew from UAS n=131
Better	27%
About the same	34
Worse	13
Don't know	26

Transferred Students

Four out of the top five reasons given for transferring from UAS referred to course/program availability and scheduling.

- The number one reason students gave for transferring from UAS was degree program not offered (43 percent), followed by want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska (34 percent), want school with more classes available (25 percent), and desired courses not offered at UAS (23 percent).
- “Other” responses included wanted Christian university, to find adventure, and out-of-state tuition too expensive (for non-Alaskans).

What are the main reasons you transferred from UAS?

	Transferred from UAS n=61
Degree program not offered at UAS	43%
Want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska	34
Want school with more classes available	25
Desired courses not offered at UAS	23
Better course scheduling elsewhere	18
Personal/family reasons	18
Want school with more people	13
Faculty is better elsewhere	8
Want school with better reputation	7
Work	3
Other	25

Transferred students most often were attending schools in the Western US states. The strongest appeal of their new school was degree program, followed by location and more course offerings.

- Students were asked what school they were currently attending. The most common response was UAA (eight responses) followed by Northern Arizona and University of Hawaii (three responses each).
- When asked what attracted them to their current school, two-thirds of transfer students cited its degree program, while half cited its location, and over one-third mentioned more course offerings.

What attracted you to that school in particular?

	Transferred from UAS n=61
Degree program	67%
Location	52
More course offerings	38
Bigger school/larger campus	21
Friends/family live nearby	21
Campus life	16
Reputation	15
Recommended by friends/family	10
Financial reasons	7
Recommended by teacher/counselor/coach	3
Other	16

Three-quarters of transferred students were satisfied with the overall quality of education at UAS, and were particularly satisfied with the quality of instructors/professors. The lowest-rated categories were variety of degree programs and variety of courses.

- Only 5 percent of transferred students were dissatisfied with the overall quality of education. (This compares to 3 percent among current students and 7 percent among withdrawn students.)
- The top-rated aspects of UAS were quality of instructional materials (87 percent satisfied or very satisfied), quality of instructors/professors (85 percent), and quality of campus facilities (80 percent).
- The quality of instructors/professors earned by far the highest number of very satisfied ratings at 44 percent. It is interesting to note that transferred students gave the instructors/professors higher ratings than did withdrawn students (26 percent very satisfied) or even current students (36 percent); perhaps this reflects on how favorably UAS faculty compare to those at the respondents' new schools.
- The lowest-rated aspects of UAS were variety of degree programs (42 percent dissatisfied or very dissatisfied), variety of courses offered (36 percent), schedule/availability of courses offered (30 percent), and extracurricular opportunities (28 percent).

How satisfied were you with the following aspects of UAS?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't know/ Did not use
Overall quality of education	20%	57%	18%	3%	2%	-%
Quality of instructional materials	20	67	12	2	-	2
Quality of instructors/professors	44	41	2	11	2	-
Quality of campus facilities	33	47	12	8	-	2
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	27	52	12	10	-	2
Academic advising from faculty	22	43	28	2	5	5
Housing availability	21	38	26	5	10	36
Quality of degree programs	11	46	24	17	2	11
Schedule/availability of courses offered	11	46	13	25	5	-
Quality of social life	23	30	25	15	8	13
Extracurricular opportunities	20	29	22	14	14	20
Preparation for employment	6	42	36	12	4	18
Academic advising from Student Resources Center	14	33	35	12	6	20
Quality of career counseling services	12	33	35	19	2	30
Variety of courses offered	3	39	21	28	8	-
Variety of degree programs	4	27	27	40	2	10

Notes: Those responding "Don't know/did not use" were removed from the base. Categories appear in order of satisfaction level (very satisfied + satisfied), with the exception of overall quality of education.

When comparing the quality of education at UAS to similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48, three-quarters of transfer students say UAS is as good or better.

- Nearly one-third of transfer students (31 percent) thought the quality of education at UAS was better than at similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48. This compares to 27 percent of withdrawn students and 24 percent of current students.
- While more transfer students said the quality is better at UAS, more also said the quality is worse, when compared to current students. Eleven percent thought the quality was worse, compared to 4 percent of current students. (The percentage of withdrawn students was comparable at 13 percent.)

In terms of overall quality of education, how do you think UAS compares to similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48?

	Transferred from UAS n=61
Better	31%
About the same	46
Worse	11
Don't know	11

Discussion Groups

Two discussion groups were held on the UAS campus in mid-April 2009, one of eight freshmen/sophomores and the other of nine juniors. Students were recruited via telephone and were given a \$25 honorarium for participating. Students represented a variety of backgrounds and fields of study. They came from Juneau, other Alaskan communities both in Southeast and Southcentral, and several different states in the Lower 48. Their disciplines included business, art, environmental science, education, mathematics, biology, English and social sciences. Ages ranged from 18 to over 50.

Best Aspects of UAS

In discussing the positive aspects of UAS, discussion group participants echoed what was revealed in the survey of current students. The faculty were cited as being of very high caliber and exceptionally helpful. Participants appreciated the opportunities they had to connect with faculty members on a personal level. They generally felt that faculty and staff go out of their way to help them succeed. They also appreciated the small, friendly campus and the beautiful setting that afforded excellent recreational opportunities.

Faculty and Staff

It's easy to move through the system. It was very bureaucratic at my previous college. I was signed up and registered in a matter of 20 minutes. Everyone was really helpful.

The best aspect is the availability of the staff and the communication level you can have with your teachers. I can call any of my professors. I went to my teacher's house for thanksgiving.

They all want us to succeed.

How helpful the teachers were was a surprise for me. I thought I was going to be on my own. If anything, they're way more helpful than any high school teacher I ever had. That was a big surprise for me. How much they're willing to do to help us get stuff done.

The faculty is not here to do research with teaching as a sideline. The faculty at my old school wanted to publish. Their focus here is on teaching. You do have personal relationship with faculty.

The Learning Center has been my saving grace, I love it. It's a great place, free, available. Like the library, I wish the hours were more flexible. Saturday and Sunday hours would be good.

The people who work here actually care about it, more than at other schools I've checked out.

A lot of the faculty members and staff truly care about students' success, I think because of the personal relationships they have with the students on a smaller campus versus large universities where you don't have that personal touch.

The professors are amazing. Here they let you into the classes you want to take regardless of whether you've declared your major or not, regardless of whether the class is full. They accommodate you at any cost.

You can talk to staff/faculty about stuff. If you need an extra day, you can talk with them. They are approachable.

The professors don't put themselves above you. My professor is doing poetry, my teacher/advisor is doing research, he's not super stuck up. He'll talk about it to us. Art teachers are all active in the art scene here, they're all putting stuff out there. That's one of my favorite parts about this school.

Small Class Size

Classes are still small enough where I can get to know the people and teachers, I like that.

The smallest class at my last college was 150. It was so impersonal, just textbook, no discussion. I like the small environment.

I went to Hawaii my first year. The learning environment here is more open, calm and relaxed. You're getting the same information, it's just a different environment. You're not just a number in a room with a 100 freshmen.

Small, Friendly Campus

It surprised me that there was a strong sense of community here, especially considering the age differences in the student body.

There is a really nice atmosphere here. Everyone is accepting and friendly.

It has a small town feel. That goes into classes. Your teachers actually care about you.

Size is the best part for me.

Research Opportunities

You can get firsthand experience doing research. Biology students can learn in the fish lab. If you're an environmental science major you can do the sea monster program, ride around in helicopters and take readings of snow lines on glaciers.

In California, you will not do any undergrad research at all. You start as a grad student.

Class Schedule/Availability and Program Availability

Like the survey respondents, students had a number of complaints around class scheduling. They were frustrated with schedules that changed at the last minute and particularly with class cancellations. A related complaint was the lack of availability of required courses, and the amount of time required to obtain a degree. A few students planned to transfer to other schools because the degree program they wanted wasn't offered at UAS. Several students also complained that the number of required classes for certain degrees was higher than at other schools.

There is poor availability of class times and classes.

I would change the way classes are scheduled. There was a bunch of classes I wanted to take, but if I took all the classes I wanted, they would have all ended up on the same day, in the same time slots.

Departmentally, they have the class schedules pretty worked out, but it's always with complete disregard to other departments' scheduling. The sociology and biology classes have nothing worked out, they're all overlapped. Not only that, the variety of classes each semester. They're not offered every semester. So you can get stuck taking only one required class.

For me, as a working person, it is a problem; you do have real limitations on when you can take classes. You can't get what you need sometimes. I've done a lot of distance too. Distance for certain types of classes isn't ideal. I just withdrew from a stats class, need to wait for live instructor.

I do wish there was more flexibility, more evening classes.

Four year degrees at this school are rare.

Classes often get cancelled because there aren't enough students.

One of my friends almost got kicked out of housing because half of their classes were cancelled.

I've already completed two years of college level classes and in order to finish an ES degree, I'd have to wait until the end of 2011 because of required classes, they're not offered frequently enough. I have to keep waiting for classes to show up, some classes get cancelled, no guarantee. A lot of classes for ES are "as need warrants" so no date on them. I will probably transfer back to California.

I might go to UAF for my major. This is great but there are a limited number of degree programs.

A lot of environmental science students end up transferring because the program requires a lot of classes other programs don't.

A lot of other bachelor of science programs require half the math, half the chemistry.

They should change the requirements. The tuition is less but it takes five to five and a half years to finish.

People who want double majors might go somewhere else to do it. UAF/UAA don't have the same rules.

One issue with degrees here: at other universities you can work with a faculty advisor to create your degree. You don't get that option here. There are some changes going on with BLA program here, but not for BA or BS.

Campus Life

Discussion group participants offered a wide range of opinions on campus life issues. Some felt that campus housing was great (especially compared to colleges in the Lower 48), others thought that it was sub-par. A number of participants felt that there should be more extracurricular activities offered to students. They said there are not many organized activities. They mentioned that the organized Eaglecrest trips get filled up very quickly, and there is demand for more. Suggestions for additional activities included outdoor recreational activities like kayaking, snowshoeing, hikes; and transportation into town for events like Folkfest.

Several students felt that UAS was the kind of campus where students generally do not participate in extracurricular activities at a high rate, so there was no point in offering more. They felt that students found their social group fairly easily and prefer to plan activities on their own.

Whether students felt that UAS should offer more or fewer extracurricular activities, there was general agreement that communication about these activities could be vastly improved. Several students pointed out instances where they found out about events only *after* they occurred. While they agreed that you could find out about events on flyers posted around campus, some students are taking classes online, and others do not think to check out the bulletin boards. They also pointed out that it was cumbersome to access the online calendar, and that it was not always maintained. Students agreed that a weekly email with a schedule of upcoming events would be welcome. Students could opt out of this option if they were not interested.

Activities

I only came this term. I don't live on campus. I'm only here for classes. Getting to know people on campus hasn't happened. Normally there would be big parties, here people are doing their own thing.

The majority of the people I've seen leave over the years has been because of lack of social interaction. 90% of people have been people who have kept to themselves, not gained a group of friends. Lack of social interaction at housing, seems deserted. A lot of people might be homesick, feel lonely.

I think there should be more organized activities. Polar plunge is great. Turkey bowling is awesome.

One thing that would get people to come here would be weekly outdoor trips. People come here for the environment. People come here for an Alaskan adventure. They get here, and they don't do anything. They have to do it on their own.

I'm not one of those people to go to organized activities. I lived in housing one semester. They have events going on. I've never been one of those people to join in. I like hanging out with my small group of friends.

There are some of us that would love to go hang out, other people are fine with not going.

They should make some UAS events open to the public. Sometimes students don't go to events because they know no one is going to show up. No one wants to go all the way down there, find out there's only 10 people, turn around and come back.

Communication

They have to promote it and communicate it. This is one of the problems I have. Anything I've learned about, I've had to find out for myself, or through word of mouth, no one came out and told me it was there.

We don't get emails about events going on. If you do get an email, they're probably emailing you the day of or an hour before. It's ridiculous. I work at the U and people don't put flyers up until the night before.

Two weeks ago, they had grand opening of laptop lounge. I got an email that day. It just so happened that my schedule allowed for it. I looked on the website for more information, there was nothing.

The alumni association is better about communicating with us about events than the university.

I just became a participant in the German Club, and I didn't even know it existed until pretty late in the year. I don't know where those things are listed.

The Banff Film Festival was put on by UAS, but I didn't find out about it from UAS.

UAS students don't organize stuff, they want it done for them.

Dorms

Our dorms are really good compared to other schools.

The actual dorm building is decent but it's not conducive for socializing. A large part of college life at my last school was the social aspect.

Advising/Tutoring

Advising was seen as an area for improvement by most discussion group participants. They complained of not being able to get appointments with their advisors, and of the advising not being helpful. They felt that freshmen and other students who hadn't yet declared their major were in particular need of more advising.

Academic advisors don't really do much.

Mine has to deal with way too many people. The good advisors are always maxed out.

Been here two years, and I've spoken with my advisor one time.

There's no advisor to help you decide on a program.

Only one advisor for undeclared. It was really hard to schedule with her because she was the only one.

Advice to UAS: maintain programs like learning center, Trio, NRC. People involved have great things to say about them.

I think a big help to first and second year students would be explaining the different degrees and what they have to do to get their degree. This school doesn't do a good job of showing different degrees.

Other Comments

Technology

I get frustrated, one of my primary interests is GIS. The university computers that you would run GIS on are inappropriately slow to run that program. They don't have the computational power to load the appropriate layers or do the statistical analysis that might be required.

My middle school in California was more technologically updated than this school.

Any type of budget to improve the computer system doesn't get spent on the right things, for example fancy new monitors.

I would change the email server. Working at UAS and being a student, that email server is always down. They should get a new, bigger one or they should pay more people to keep it running.

UAS online is down a lot too, whenever I need to take an online test, for instance.

As a student, I get so frustrated. Sometimes in my environmental science class, I can't download my paper I need to read for that week's class. If I can't download the study materials, it's going to affect my progress in the class.

Recruiting

They should be pushing their art dept more than they are now. There are six amazing professors. And nobody knows about this art department. It's incredible. It's one of the best in the country in terms of ceramics.

UAS doesn't put that much effort into recruiting.

Other

Sometimes in those cases where teachers are taking so much time to address those specific issues, I get frustrated with that because we're at a university. I think sometimes students take advantage of that system, it bogs down the tempo of the class. In some classes, it gets abused more than in other classes.

I heard student government was voting to cut back on undergrad research. I think that could lose students.

We seem to have a lot of ridiculous renovations.

Faculty and Staff Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 11 UAS staff and faculty members. Because ten of the 11 interviews were with Juneau-based employees, all campus-specific comments refer to the Juneau campus unless otherwise noted.

Measuring Student Retention

An interesting point made by several interviewees was that even though UAS appears to have low retention rates, those figures can be misleading. Many students come to UAS with no intention of obtaining a degree. They take the classes they need, and they either enter the workforce or transfer to another school – they achieve their goals and are often very satisfied with their experience at UAS. UAS should explore ways to express retention rates in non-traditional measures: for example, how many students is UAS retaining that intended to obtain a degree when they first enrolled? Advisors could record students' educational goals when they register, and track whether these goals were met. An annual survey of students similar to the one conducted for this study would also be a valuable tool that would more accurately demonstrate how well UAS is serving its students.

COMMENTS

Some people only need a couple of classes but in order to get financial aid, they sign up for degree courses. It affects our retention numbers big-time.

Some people come with the plan to come for two years. It doesn't help us with metrics. But they affordably get their GERs out of the way.

[Regarding vocational education] *Some students come in thinking they want a two-year degree. Once they take the technical classes, they realize they can get a high-paying job with their classes. It's successful for the students. The marketplace doesn't really want the two-year degree.*

Reasons for Students Leaving UAS

Those interviewed were in general agreement about the main reasons that students leave UAS before obtaining their degree, reflective of the survey results presented earlier in this report: desire to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska, want a program not offered at UAS, can't complete their degree in a timely manner, lack of motivation/interest, and not academically prepared. Many contacts pointed out that UAS is going to lose a portion its students in any case due to the nature of the institution; retention efforts should be strategic and targeted at the students most likely to obtain a degree.

COMMENTS

We do much better with the distance population because they're afforded a lot more flexibility. Some of them can move out of state and do our program. We don't see as much of that population leaving because we've made it a lot easier for them.

The two biggest retention issues are scheduling and advising. If we could fix those two things, really fix them, we would be able to retain students and graduate them. We'd see a big difference.

We should have a picture book with everyone's faces; we should get to know every one of these freshmen and make sure they're coming back.

Course Availability and Scheduling

Course availability and scheduling were seen as major challenges for students, and major contributors to student loss. There were several main themes to the comments shared on this topic:

- UAS does not stick to its six-year course plan. Students end up graduating much later than they originally planned because the courses they planned on taking are not offered as scheduled.
- Classes are often canceled at the last minute, causing students to scramble to fill their schedule, and (again) postponing their graduation date.
- The classes are not conveniently scheduled as to day of the week or time of day. There is no inter-departmental cooperation on scheduling. Students are sometimes forced to arrive at classes late or leave early to accommodate the varied start and end times. Even after a course is scheduled, it might be changed at the last minute by the professor.
- The inconsistent daily and weekly course schedules make it difficult for full-time students to participate in evening activities, have jobs, and fully engage in campus life. This affects their satisfaction at UAS.
- Several of those interviewed attributed scheduling issues to too much freedom given to faculty, who sometimes schedule classes according to their own personal preferences, rather than what is best for students. A couple of contacts also commented that faculty were allowed to teach too many special interest topics, rather than required courses that students would need to obtain their degree.

Although these issues were echoed throughout the interviews, several contacts pointed out that scheduling has improved recently. They also offered some suggestions:

- Honor the six-year plan. Even if a class has low enrollment, the class should be offered as it was promised.
- There should be more interdepartmental cooperation on course scheduling. Courses should run Monday through Friday, and be offered in time blocks that do not conflict. Courses that are likely to be taken concurrently should not be offered at the same time.
- Faculty should not be given so much leeway in their course scheduling. They need more guidance from the administration on what is going to work best for students. They should not be allowed to (for instance) offer finals a week earlier than everyone else.

COMMENTS

There is a lack of courses available when the student needs it. I know students who have had to wait eight years to get through with their course offerings.

You have to have daytime classes, with a daytime schedule. It's a size issue. We also have to hold to our six year plan.

There are issues with the schedule. We don't systematically schedule tracks that students could take. You don't see a track that would go one class after another. Sometimes the GER's will overlap. We don't look very critically at scheduling. My impression is the faculty wants to teach when they want to teach. There needs to be more control. There is a disconnect of the student as the consumer for when the class should be offered. We've become four-day-a-week school.

We are not a large metropolitan community college. We can't be everything to everybody. We don't have the resources. If we started having lots of night classes, it would be at the expense of other students.

There are upper division students that are leaving to finish earlier and quicker; we don't have enough classes every semester to get them through.

The day we opened registration, we canceled classes. It blows me away. What does that say to a student? It happens every single semester, definitely in arts and sciences. The strictness on the classes not having enough enrollment, I understand that from financial perspective. But we shouldn't just drop a student out of a class, we need a back-up plan.

At most universities, the highest non-retention happens during the first year of school...but we still have a consistent departure rate at the junior level. There is not a sense of institutional loyalty. Part of that is, they don't see themselves advancing quickly enough to graduation. It's five, six, seven years.

The course sequences that we have committed to, we have to keep to. Even if there are only five students, go ahead with it so those students can graduate on time. It's atrocious how many classes get dropped, changed. ...Faculty need to give emphasis to core courses, required courses, maybe fewer special topics courses.

Scheduling is a free-for-all, we don't follow our six-year sequence. No one is holding faculty to the six-year sequence. It's been unpoliced. Faculty has been given too much freedom in scheduling. It becomes impossible for a student to get out in timely manner.

Lots of instructors who only want to teach two days a week, or only want to teach on Friday. Faculty sometimes offer their finals earlier because they don't want to work during finals week. Instructors change the class time because someone has a conflict. Some faculty teach three hours at one time because it's convenient for them. Faculty are given too much freedom.

Faculty don't want to teach when there are openings. They want to teach when they want to teach. Faculty shouldn't be given so much freedom in scheduling.

If I were president of UA, we'd have common start and end date, a common break time, and one catalog. But you have a three-course delivery system. We're not making this easy for the students.

Student Advising

Advising was seen as a retention issue by several interviewees. The main themes were:

- Not all advisors are adequately qualified and trained.
- There are not enough advisors for students.
- First-year students and others who have not declared their major do not receive enough guidance.
- Not all faculty are qualified to be advisors, and some of them do not want to be.

One contact pointed out that new software was going to be incorporated at UAS that would allow for an "online degree audit." It will help advisors work with their students to determine which classes they need to

obtain their degree. Another welcome improvement is the recent hiring of an advisor for distance students. Other suggestions included:

- Students should have mandatory academic advising. It was suggested that before they can sign up for classes, they have to meet with an advisor every semester, at least until they are juniors.
- Advisors should be more proactive in contacting students who might not be self-motivated; these students are most at risk of leaving. It was commented that Native students would particularly benefit from additional advising and guidance.
- There should be more of an effort to make personal contact with distance students.
- There should be a first-year orientation class that helps students understand how to navigate through their university experience. The class should be credited.

COMMENTS

Students need to understand the importance of advising. When we changed from community college to university, the mechanisms never changed. Students apply for admission and languish there until they register. They should be meeting with advisors.

A lot of faculty are trained in one narrow area. They don't see advising as their job. The way we changed our advising really hurt us.

Some faculty aren't there to be academic advisors. They resent having that responsibility and don't take it seriously. Some faculty members advise more than they need to, taking on more students, taking up slack from other faculty members.

Not all faculty are cut out for advising.

They need more advising at the student resources center. Even non-degree seeking students need advising.

Mandatory academic advising is the easiest and fastest way to increase student retention.

There isn't a good series of first-year classes for freshmen: I'd like to see courses linked together, a cohort model type idea, handing students their schedule for the first year. We give them a full-time schedule that includes a variety of things. Right now it's a free-for-all when it comes to picking classes. We need more intensive advising and a more scripted program.

The advisors don't have too much time. Because of that, they aren't real proactive on advising. They're in their office, they take appointments, but the students have to take initiative. The ones that need the most guidance are unlikely to take the initiative. So the institution needs to do more outreach. There are efforts every now and then but they're ad hoc.

We need academic advisors that are on the hook, we need to hold people accountable. There should be weekly contact by someone who can provide guidance on a weekly basis. Right now advisors sit back, take appointments; they don't have set goals. There should be quality contact every week.

Current staff of advising office is doing a really good job. There have been improvements over the last few years. They're doing a much better job of keeping track.

[Re: new Humanities 120 class] We need more invested in that kind of thing instead of remedial catch-up. Get them excited about being here first. It makes them feel like they're part of this community. In my experience, for students who are underprepared, if you get them engaged, they find ways to prepare.

We should require a freshman orientation seminar that would last through the student's first semester. Where you could match up somebody out of student services, co-teach the class, learn about campus, learn about

resources, things you can do, what it means to be successful. That kind of thing would be a wonderful tool for us to have.

I would have a different philosophy of advising. The standard spin is: take your basics, and an elective. That is sometimes not a path to success. If you know the student is going to flunk algebra, 1st semester they will end up on probation. You might want to let people build momentum and confidence. Find out their strengths and weaknesses. Let them have a success, then let them get to algebra when they're ready for it.

We should be coming up with ways to have more personal contact with distance students, people who are hired specifically for the job, not faculty. Other distance programs have this kind of thing. They're not an academic advisor. They call, keep in contact, they have a caseload of 85-90 students. The idea is to keep in contact over a 6-week period. That could make some real difference. If we had the resources to hire someone to do it that might be a good thing.

Anytime a distance student comes in, we should have a short course, required, in terms of how to negotiate the whole distance learning structure. What do you need in terms of computer, how self-motivated do you have to be? Tests to make sure what you have is going to work with our system. Getting students involved with that kind of learning, so they're ready to learn when they start. Sometimes students have used one system, then they're afraid to switch. We need to help them be ready.

Campus Life

There were a number of issues raised by interviewees with regards to campus life. These included:

- Child care was mentioned by several contacts as an issue that drives some students away; they suggested that the University continue looking into offering more assistance to students who need child care in order to attend their classes.
- Transportation was pointed out as a problem for some students, many of whom cannot afford vehicles of their own and have to rely on a bus system that does not provide frequent enough service. Those attending classes both downtown and at the Auke Lake campus face more problems in this regard.
- Lack of communication about events and activities was cited as a problem by several contacts. Students (as well as faculty and staff) often do not find out about events until just before or after they occur.
- One contact mentioned that on-campus housing was a problem in that it had a culture of partying, which leads to students falling behind in school and eventually dropping out.

COMMENTS

Lack of child care is a huge problem in Juneau. It's the number one thing I hear from students as to why they're not taking classes. It's a big problem for staff and faculty too. It makes a difference in morale; students have four advisors in three years because they've had to leave due to child care issues.

If we had child care services, that would send our enrollment off the charts. I'm sure it's a risk management nightmare. Even a drop-off facility that worked in with early education classes would be something. So many students can't come because of kids. It's a big problem in Juneau.

We could have maybe a more active or visual campus life. One of the things that I have suggested is that we be really truthful and honest in our recruiting efforts and recruit people who will like it here... I think it would be pretty easy to be completely uninvolved and then become dissatisfied. To get involved the students have to actively seek involvement. For very young students, it's a new thing. Same reason people leave Juneau, they

don't like the isolation. I think student activities people work pretty hard to have things going on but there's not critical mass. Lots of small tight knit groups.

If you talk to people organizing events, they say they bend over backwards to make things available. It's really hard to find out about things happening in advance. You might get notification or an email, or a flyer a day ahead time. I saw not one single thing about Polar Bear plunge. The U calendar sucks. The person responsible says she can't put things unless people send her things. There has to be a greater effort at making things visible. Even when something is organized, it's word of mouth.

One strategy I'll always push: concerted effort to have a healthy student population of employees. One key thing to keep them engaged is putting them to work. Their first choice for work should be a campus job. The students who work on campus, they end up sticking around. They end up doing fine.

There is an issue on campus housing around partying. Kids from rural areas, haven't seen many of them do great on campus housing. Every fall, of the freshmen who come in, there are always a handful who get kicked out of housing. They need more advising, more face time, trying to gauge how serious they are. There are people who come in who aren't mentally and emotionally ready for transition. They get caught up in partying and don't adjust.

There is isolation for students coming from small communities. They don't have transportation. I was thrilled when we got Rec Center, but it's a bit far from campus.

If you truly take the leap and live on campus, you can get the collegiate experience. We haven't marketed that to our local students.

I strongly favor bringing back intercollegiate athletics. It was tried before, and there was a component to student life that we were never able to recapture. I know it's expensive. Now with our own facility, that's the next step in student life. We'd have to be closer to our goal of 1,000 students before doing sports.

One thing I've found, if you're a student in housing, and you don't have a car, you're captive. There is not a lot of easy access to stuff. It's a quality of life issue. Some kind of shuttle system would really help.

We're not like other big schools, we have no athletic teams, nothing for kids to rally around.

We need to figure out something that really gives these kids an identity.

Administrative Issues

A number of those interviewed mentioned the challenges of the last year in terms of relations between the faculty and administration. They worried that the tension would be felt by students, and that it would lower student morale. They also were concerned about faculty leaving as a result of the poor relations. However, most believed that the situation had improved recently, and would continue to improve in the future. A couple of contacts also commented on the lack of administration follow-through on previous efforts to increase retention.

COMMENTS

One of the biggest things to understand for new administration or new faculty is that it takes a while to understand Juneau. You can't do what you did at your last school here, it won't work here.

There was a task force on student retention started three years ago, but nothing has come of it. Nothing has changed, nothing has happened. The few committees that have met have come up with suggestions, but they haven't been accepted. The administration hasn't been open to efforts to increase retention.

I think that the students pick up on the tension between the administration and faculty. Faculty are applying elsewhere in droves. Students are attached to faculty, and when faculty members leave, there's a hole in their program. It makes them worry about whether they'll get their classes, finish in a timely fashion. Whether they can or can't, they worry about it. The general climate affects students.

Good faculty retain students. We've had huge faculty turnover in the last five years. There is a direct correlation between faculty retention and student retention.

I sat on a committee for an entire year, we had all kinds of suggestions, but none of them were implemented...We need to make decisions more like a business. It takes time to find out what's working, what's not working. We need to be a little more patient.

There is a real disconnect between administration and faculty. The vision for UAS is not clear at this point. Admin has not been clear at communicating their vision, or at helping faculty refine what the vision could be in terms of budget. That's a really important issue to figure out. What is it we're going to do, how are we going to do it?

We do have a current challenge: open warfare between faculty and administration. Our campus climate, we'll have to work on it, it's going to filter through the faculty; it will affect morale. It will affect their teaching and students will start to notice. I think they're going to reconcile. I'm hopeful that next year they'll continue to make progress.

We haven't defined who we're going to be when we grow up. We're a community college in so many ways. Trying to fill the need in career tech, certificate, but also trying to do four years. Master's programs are going great. We struggle a little more bringing in students wanting four year degrees. We have a bit of identity crisis, we're still trying to be everything to everyone.

Recruitment

Several important points were made with regard to recruitment, including the suggestion that UAS target students who are most likely to be successful (such as transfer students, people from outside Alaska, those drawn by the location). One contact felt that UAS should do a better job of informing local high school students of what UAS has to offer, and another pointed out that recruiting high-achieving students will have a positive impact on student retention, as they influence their classmates to be engaged.

COMMENTS

We could do a better job of convincing people in Juneau that UAS is serious. I taught a high school class and a lot of them didn't know UAS had an English degree. There is not enough information and outreach letting students know what is offered here.

Students who do well here are those that come from outside, people who come for scenery and recreational opportunities. I don't know how to get those students here. The national student exchange, we do get a fair amount of recruitment efforts out of that. Students come for a year, decide they can stay and get their degree, we could do a better job of doing that. That's been improving, program has been expanding. Obvious place to tap into. Good, motivated, interested demographic.

We get a lot of underprepared students, students who don't want to be in college. We do a pretty good job with those students. But we do a really good job with the high-end students. If we had more of them, it would make a huge difference. If I have ONE student who is motivated, it elevates the whole level of discussion. We would do well to recruit that level of students. Not only UA scholars but from Outside too. It makes the classes better.

Other Issues

A big point of frustration is technology. There are too many logins. When one of our instructors chooses to use a different system than what UAS provides, it requires a different password and username.

My students are generally pretty bright. They complain about less than stellar students polluting their classes. Occasionally a student will decide to transfer to a school where there are more good students and less lackadaisical ones. It's difficult for UAS because we're open admissions and we're trying to serve all the populations, that's hard to do sometimes.

For Native students, what I would do is build more, bigger presence in outreach. On web, during recruiting and retention, all the way throughout, we should have students on the phones, on email, and a clear presence on web. We don't do that right now; there's not a lot of outreach once they're here. There is lots of opportunity to get involved but they're not going to take the initiative. It should be part of the culture and system that we do that. We need to get students involved on campus.

We nickel and dime our students to death. We should do per-credit tax that affects everyone. Call it student fee. Divide it up between the programs. It would be so much less offensive and so much easier to understand. It would simplify the bill. Right now each service is provided according to credits. Too complicated.

Survey Instruments

Please see attached for the Current Students Survey and Transferred/Withdrawn Students Survey instruments.

UAS Student Retention and Market Research Study

Survey of Current Students

SCREENER Are you currently enrolled in class(es) at UAS?

01 Yes

02 No (end survey OR link to other survey)

1. Why did you choose to attend UAS? (Check all that apply) (Randomize responses)

01 Low tuition cost

02 Could live at home

03 Requirement for work/job training

04 It's the only option in Juneau

05 Access to financing or scholarship

06 Open enrollment

07 Recommendation by friends or family

08 Recommendation by high school teacher/counselor/coach

09 Reputation of degree programs

10 Inexpensive method for completing undergraduate general requirements

11 Recruited by UAS representative

12 Publications and brochures received from UAS

13 Small campus

14 Alaska location, beautiful campus

15 Other _____

1a. Which of these was the most important reason you chose to attend UAS?

2. How prepared were you academically when you started classes at UAS?

01 Very prepared (skip to Q3)

02 Prepared (skip to Q3)

03 Unprepared

04 Very unprepared

05 Don't know (skip to Q3)

2a. In which areas did you feel unprepared?

01 English/writing

02 Math

03 Science

04 Computer skills

05 Study skills

06 Other _____

3. Overall, how satisfied are you with your UAS educational experience?

01 Very satisfied (skip to Q4)

02 Satisfied (skip to Q4)

03 Neutral (skip to Q4)

04 Dissatisfied

05 Very dissatisfied

06 Don't know (skip to Q4)

3a. Please explain why you are dissatisfied.

4. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your UAS experience? (Rotate a-o)

- 01 Very satisfied
 - 02 Satisfied
 - 03 Neutral
 - 04 Dissatisfied
 - 05 Very dissatisfied
 - 06 Don't know/do not use
- a. Quality of instructors/professors
 - b. Variety of courses offered
 - c. Schedule/availability of courses offered
 - d. Quality of degree programs
 - e. Variety of degree programs
 - f. Quality of career counseling services
 - g. Quality of instructional materials
 - h. Quality of campus facilities
 - i. Quality of social life
 - j. Housing availability
 - k. Extracurricular opportunities
 - l. Academic advising from Student Resources Center
 - m. Academic advising from faculty
 - n. Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs
 - o. Preparation for employment

5. How important are each of the following aspects to your UAS experience? (Rotate a-o)

- 01 Very important
 - 02 Somewhat important
 - 03 Not important
 - 04 Don't know/do not use
- a. Quality of instructors/professors
 - b. Variety of courses offered
 - c. Schedule/availability of courses offered
 - d. Quality of degree programs
 - e. Variety of degree programs
 - f. Quality of career counseling services
 - g. Quality of instructional materials
 - h. Quality of campus facilities
 - i. Quality of social life
 - j. Housing availability
 - k. Extracurricular opportunities
 - l. Academic advising from Student Resources Center
 - m. Academic advising from faculty
 - n. Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs
 - o. Preparation for employment

6. What do you like the most about UAS?

7. What do you like the least about UAS?

8. Are you enrolled in a degree program at UAS?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No (skip to Q12)

9. Did you apply to colleges or universities other than UAS (for your current degree program)?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No (skip to Q10)

9a. Which colleges or universities?

10. How likely are you to transfer from UAS to a different school before completing your degree?

- 01 Very likely
- 02 Likely
- 03 Unlikely (skip to Q11)
- 04 Very unlikely (skip to Q11)
- 05 Don't know (skip to Q11)

10a. Why do you plan to transfer from UAS? (Check all that apply) (Randomize responses)

- 01 Degree program not offered at UAS
- 02 Desired courses not offered at UAS
- 03 Better course scheduling elsewhere
- 04 Faculty is better elsewhere
- 05 Want school with better reputation
- 06 Want school with more people
- 07 Want school with more classes available
- 08 Want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska
- 09 Personal/family reasons
- 10 Other _____
- 11 Don't know

Skip to Q12

11. How likely are you to withdraw from UAS (without transferring to another school) before completing your degree?

- 01 Very likely
- 02 Likely
- 03 Unlikely (skip to Q12)
- 04 Very unlikely (skip to Q12)
- 05 Don't know (skip to Q12)

11a. Why do you think you might withdraw from UAS? (Randomize responses)

- 01 Financial reasons
- 02 Schedule/too busy to attend classes
- 03 Burned out/lost interest
- 04 Moving from Juneau/Southeast
- 05 Not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors

- 06 Personal/family reasons
- 07 Other _____
- 08 Don't know

12. What do you think are the main reasons other students at UAS transfer to other schools? (Randomize responses)

- 01 Degree program not offered at UAS
- 02 Desired courses not offered at UAS
- 03 Better course scheduling elsewhere
- 04 Faculty is better elsewhere
- 05 Want school with better reputation
- 06 Want school with more people
- 07 Want school with more classes available
- 08 Want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska
- 09 Personal/family reasons
- 10 Other _____
- 11 Don't know

13. What do you think are the main reasons other students at UAS withdraw without completing their degree?

- 01 Financial reasons
- 02 Schedule/too busy to attend classes
- 03 Moving from Juneau/Southeast
- 04 Not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors
- 05 Personal/family reasons
- 06 Other _____
- 07 Don't know

14. What do you think UAS could do to encourage more students to complete their degrees at UAS?

- 00 Don't know

15. In terms of overall quality of education, how do you think UAS compares to similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48?

- 01 Better
- 02 About the same
- 03 Worse
- 04 Don't know

16. Please provide your name, birthdate and email address in order to qualify for the prize drawing. Your survey responses will be kept confidential.

UAS Student Retention and Market Research Study

Survey of Transferred/Withdrawn Students

Hi, this is _____ with the McDowell Group, an Alaska research firm. We're conducting a study of former University of Alaska students. I'd like to ask you just a few questions. If you participate in this study your name will be entered in a drawing for a \$250 Amazon.com gift certificate or 10,000 Alaska Airlines miles.

Screener Did you attend University of Alaska Southeast at any point in the last five years?
(If no, discontinue survey)

1. Did you transfer to another school, or did you withdraw from UAS?

- 01 Transferred to another school (skip to Q6)
- 02 Withdrew
- 03 Neither (discontinue survey)

Questions for those who WITHDREW

2. What are the main reasons you withdrew from UAS? (Check all that apply)

- 01 Financial reasons
- 02 Schedule/too busy to attend classes
- 03 Burned out/lost interest
- 04 Moved from Juneau/Southeast
- 05 Not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors
- 06 Personal/family reasons
- 07 Just taking one class
- 08 Other _____
- 09 Don't know

3. For each of the following aspects of UAS, please tell me whether you were very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied.

(READ, ROTATE LIST)	1 <i>Very satisfied</i>	2 <i>Satisfied</i>	3 <i>Neutral</i>	4 <i>Dissatisfied</i>	5 <i>Very Dissatisfied</i>	6 <i>Don't know/ did not use</i>
a. Overall quality of education	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Quality of instructors/professors	1	2	2	3	4	5
c. Variety of courses offered	1	2	2	3	4	5
d. Schedule/availability of courses offered	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Quality of degree programs	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Variety of degree programs	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Quality of career counseling services	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Quality of instructional materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Quality of campus facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. Quality of social life	1	2	3	4	5	6

k. Housing availability	1	2	3	4	5	6
l. Extracurricular opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6
m. Academic advising from Student Resources Center	1	2	3	4	5	6
n. Academic advising from faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6
o. Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	1	2	3	4	5	6
p. Preparation for employment	1	2	3	4	5	6

4. How likely are you to return to UAS to complete a degree? (Read 1-4)

- 01 Very likely (skip to Q10)
- 02 Likely (skip to Q10)
- 03 Unlikely
- 04 Very unlikely
- 05 Don't know (skip to Q10)

5. How likely are you to return to a different school to complete a degree? (Read 1-4)

- 01 Very likely
- 02 Likely
- 03 Unlikely
- 04 Very unlikely
- 05 Don't know

Skip to Q10

Questions for those who TRANSFERRED

6. What are the main reasons you transferred from UAS? (Check all that apply)

- 01 Degree program not offered at UAS
- 02 Desired courses not offered at UAS
- 03 Better course scheduling elsewhere
- 04 Faculty is better elsewhere
- 05 Want school with better reputation
- 06 Want school with more people
- 07 Want school with more classes available
- 08 Want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska
- 09 Personal/family reasons
- 10 Other _____
- 11 Don't know

7. For each of the following aspects of UAS, please tell me whether you were very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied.

(READ, ROTATE LIST)	1 <i>Very satisfied</i>	2 <i>Satisfied</i>	3 <i>Neutral</i>	4 <i>Dissatisfied</i>	5 <i>Very Dissatisfied</i>	6 <i>Don't know/ did not use</i>
a. Overall quality of education	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Quality of instructors/professors	1	2	2	3	4	5
c. Variety of courses offered	1	2	2	3	4	5
d. Schedule/availability of courses offered	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Quality of degree programs	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Variety of degree programs	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Quality of career counseling services	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Quality of instructional materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Quality of campus facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. Quality of social life	1	2	3	4	5	6
k. Housing availability	1	2	3	4	5	6
l. Extracurricular opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6
m. Academic advising from Student Resources Center	1	2	3	4	5	6
n. Academic advising from faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6
o. Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	1	2	3	4	5	6
p. Preparation for employment	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. What school did you transfer to? _____

9. What attracted you to that school in particular? (Check all that apply)

- 01 Degree program
- 02 More course offerings
- 03 Bigger school/larger campus
- 03 Reputation
- 04 Location
- 05 Campus life
- 06 Friends/family live nearby
- 07 Recommended by friends/family
- 08 Recommended by teacher/counselor/coach
- 09 Other _____

ALL RESPONDENTS

10. What steps can UAS take to encourage students to complete their degrees at UAS?

00 Don't know

11. In terms of overall quality of education, how do you think UAS compares to similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48? Is it better, worse, or about the same?

01 Better

02 About the same

03 Worse

04 Don't know

Thank you for participating in this important project!

[Don't ask]

Student name _____

Student phone _____