University of Alaska Southeast
Annual Priorities: Updated 2017-18

UAS MISSION & CORE THEMES

MISSION: Student learning enhanced by faculty scholarship, undergraduate research and creative activities, community engagement, and the cultures and environment of Southeast Alaska

CORE THEMES: Student Success, Teaching & Learning, Community Engagement, Research & Creative Expression

UAS VISION

The University of Alaska Southeast is recognized as a destination of choice for students seeking excellent academic programs and engaging learning opportunities that integrate the environment and cultures of Southeast Alaska

BACKGROUND

These annual priorities for AY17-18 are an outcome of a workshop held on August 14, 2017 and attended by UAS faculty, staff, students, and administrators. The workshop involved engagement of faculty, staff, and student governance groups, and representatives from all three UAS campuses: Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka. Acting on these priorities is part of a process of continuous improvement which is the hallmark of the NWCCU accreditation process.

REAFFIRMING MISSION & COMMITMENT TO CULTURAL SAFETY AND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

UAS’ mission, vision, and core themes—developed over seven years ago—enjoy continuing support across the university community. Discussions about these priorities highlight the central importance of student learning and providing a student-centered education. They also underscore a continuing need to focus on educational equity and inclusiveness. We are committed to a vision and a practice of education that promotes equity and opportunity for all. This includes demonstrating respect for the diverse cultures, languages, and histories represented in Alaska’s population—and especially in Southeast Alaska. It means reaching out to promote the success of all students, including first-generation students, those who previously felt excluded from the university community, and/or who have been typically underrepresented in higher education. It means continuing to expand our curriculum to incorporate knowledge and perspectives reflective of our increasingly diverse world. It means recruiting, hiring, and promoting qualified faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds—faculty and staff who broadly reflect the changing character of the students and the communities that we serve.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT TO SUSTAIN UAS ACCREDITATION

As an overriding goal, UAS must sharpen its focus in the coming year on continuous improvement in meeting accreditation standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). The five NWCCU standards for accreditation (listed below) are interconnected and build upon each other in a recursive, seven-year cycle of continuous improvement. UAS is expected to produce its next major accreditation review and to undergo a
site visit in 2019. The NWCCU standards focus on:

- The institution's mission and core themes
- Translation of the core themes into assessable objectives supported by programs and services
- Appraisal of the institution's potential to fulfill the mission
- Planning and implementation in achieving and assessing the desired outcomes of programs and services, and
- Evaluation of the institution's efforts to fulfill the mission and assess its ability to monitor its environment, adapt, and sustain itself as a viable institution.

A major focus for the coming year at UAS needs to be continuing attention to the following:

1) Refinement and utilization of metrics that link UAS strategic priorities to our mission and core themes
2) Use Strategic Planning & Budgeting Advisory Committee to link budget priorities to mission and core themes
3) Attention to improving the quality and coherence of our General Education Requirements (GERs)
4) Continued focus on assessment to know that our priorities and efforts are producing desired outcomes
5) Document mission fulfillment through metrics that are mission-centered, systemic, and meaningful

**SUMMARY OF 2017-18 PRIORITIES**

- **Increase enrollment** through strategic marketing, recruitment, and enrollment management

- **Improve retention and completion** through quality advising, campus life experiences, and student services

- **Capitalize on strategic opportunities**: Alaska College of Education, Auke Bay facility, maritime training

- **Promote quality instruction through instructional design services** and scholarship of teaching and learning

- **Strengthen high-impact interdisciplinary learning opportunities**

- **Promote career pathways and workforce development** through employer and K-12 partnerships

- **Promote campus safety, security, and equity for all students**