

*University of Alaska Southeast
Student Retention Study*

Prepared for:
University of Alaska Southeast



Research-Based Consulting

Juneau
Anchorage

September 2012

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Prepared by:



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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 There were three elements to the project: a survey of current students; a survey of students who had transferred or withdrawn from UAS; and two discussion groups with current students. Following are key findings.

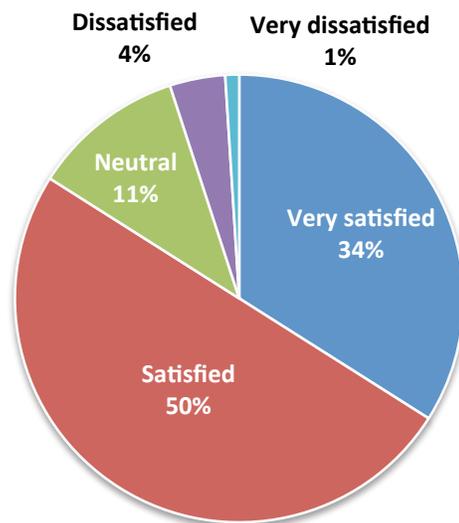
Survey of Current Students

All students currently seeking a degree and registered for at least three credits were invited to participate in an online survey. Of the 1,824 students contacted, 594 completed the survey. Results were tested for statistical differences among several sub-groups, including part-time vs. full-time, age, campus, traditional vs. distance, school (Arts & Sciences, Management, Education), and class. Although most of the questions were repeated from a 2009 study, only results among full-time students are comparable, as the definition of part-time students was changed for the 2012 survey.

Satisfaction with the overall educational experience at UAS is generally high, with 84 percent satisfied, and only 5 percent dissatisfied. Full-time students report slightly higher satisfaction than in 2009.

- One-third of students said they were very satisfied, while another 50 percent were satisfied. Four percent were dissatisfied, 1 percent were very dissatisfied, and 11 percent were neutral.
- Satisfaction was similar across nearly all sub-groups: part-time versus full-time, age group, class, campus, traditional versus distance, and gender. Students in the Schools of Career Education and Management were slightly more satisfied than students in the Schools of Education and Arts and Sciences.
- Students who said they were likely to withdraw or transfer reported lower satisfaction ratings: 19 percent were very satisfied (compared to 39 percent of those unlikely to transfer), and 11 percent were dissatisfied (versus 3 percent of those unlikely to transfer).
- The percent of full-time students who were very satisfied increased from 30 percent in 2009 to 35 percent in 2012. Other results were similar: from 50 to 47 percent satisfied, from 16 to 12 percent neutral, from 4 to 5 percent dissatisfied, and from <1 to 1 percent very dissatisfied.

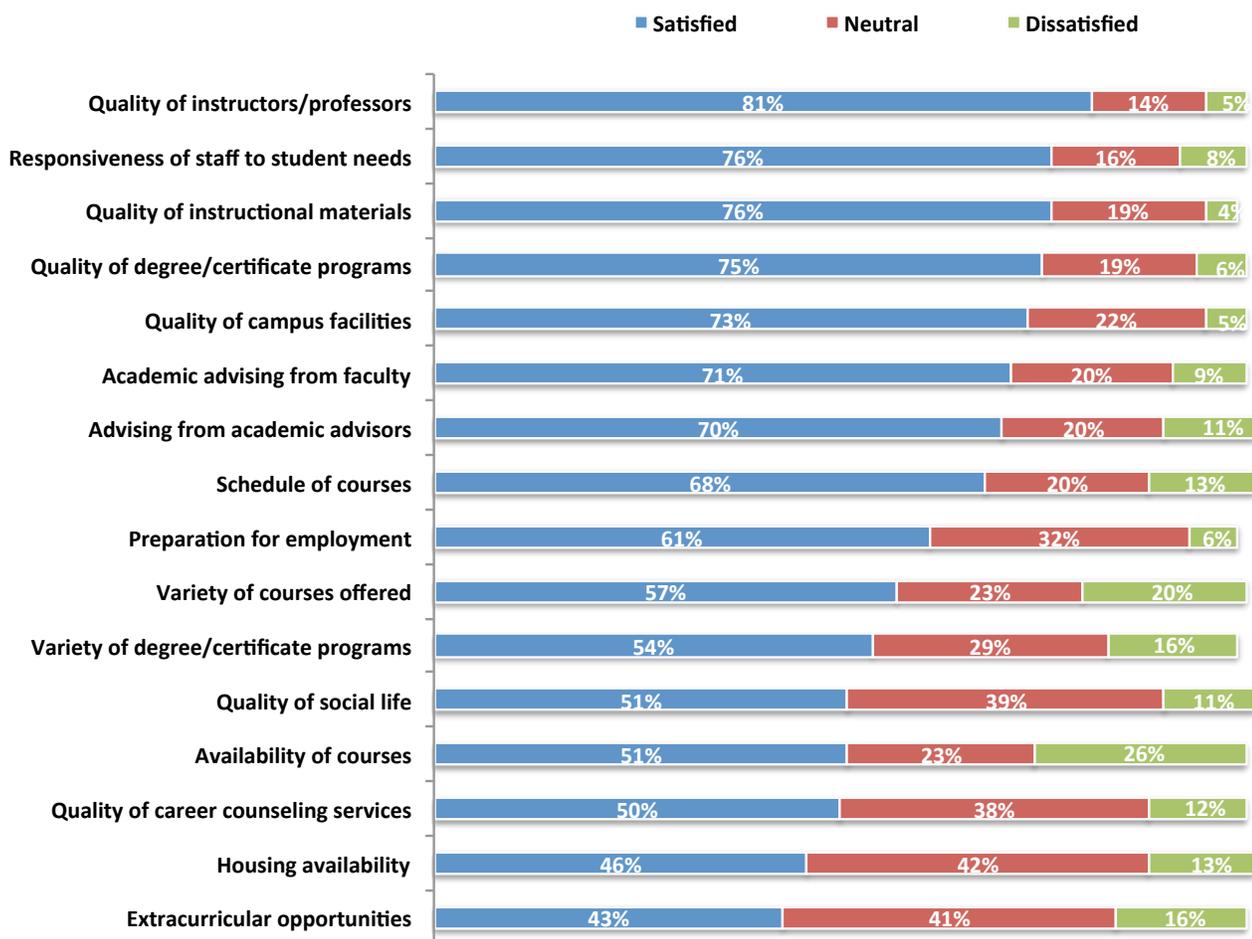
Overall, how satisfied are you with your UAS educational experience?



The highest rated aspects of UAS were instructors/professors, responsiveness of UAS staff, instructional materials, and degree/certificate programs. Areas with higher levels of dissatisfaction were availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.) and variety of courses.

- Additional categories rated highly by current students included quality of campus facilities (73 percent), academic advising from faculty (71 percent), and advising from academic advisors (70 percent).
- Additional categories generating significant dissatisfied responses included variety of degree/certificate programs (16 percent dissatisfied), extracurricular opportunities (16 percent), schedule of courses (13 percent), and housing availability (13 percent).

Satisfaction with Specific Areas: Summary Results



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. “Schedule of courses” refers to time of day/day of week; “availability of courses” refers to each semester, annually, etc.

- Students were also asked to rate each of the above categories in terms of importance. The categories earning the highest number of very important ratings were quality of instructors/professors (92 percent), quality of degree/certificate programs (83 percent), and availability of courses (81 percent).
- Categories earning lower number of very important ratings included quality of social life (24 percent), extracurricular opportunities (27 percent), and housing availability (36 percent).

- Several categories earned both high satisfaction ratings and high importance ratings: quality of instructors/professors, quality of degree/certificate programs, and responsiveness of UAS staff. Two categories earned high importance ratings and relatively low satisfaction ratings: availability of courses and variety of courses.

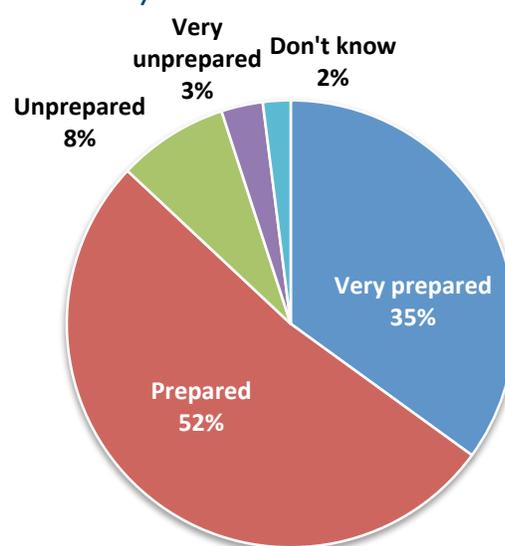
Compared to 2009, full-time students are slightly more satisfied with the variety of degree programs, and less satisfied with housing availability and social life.

- The percent of full-time students very satisfied with the variety of degree/certificate programs increased from 46 percent in 2009 to 53 percent in 2012, while those very satisfied with housing availability dropped from 51 to 43 percent, and those very satisfied with social life dropped from 60 to 48 percent. Satisfaction with other categories stayed generally the same between the two years.
- Because the 2009 category of “schedule/availability of courses” was split into two categories in 2012, it is difficult to compare results to 2009. However, splitting the category revealed that full-time students are more satisfied with the schedule of courses (time of day/day of week), which earned 22 percent very satisfied ratings, than they are with the availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.), which earned 10 percent very satisfied ratings.

One out of 10 students felt academically unprepared when they started at UAS. Compared to 2009, full-time students felt more prepared.

- Over one-third of current students felt very prepared academically when they started classes, and another 52 percent prepared. Eleven percent felt unprepared or very unprepared.
- The percentage of full-time students who said they were prepared or very prepared increased from 80 to 88 percent between 2009 and 2012, while those saying they were unprepared dropped from 18 to 11 percent.
- The most common subject where students felt unprepared was math (56 percent of unprepared students), followed by English/writing (50 percent), life skills (time management, money management, organization; 48 percent), and science (30 percent).

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



The ability to take online courses is the number one reason that students chose UAS, and it is the most-liked aspect of UAS.

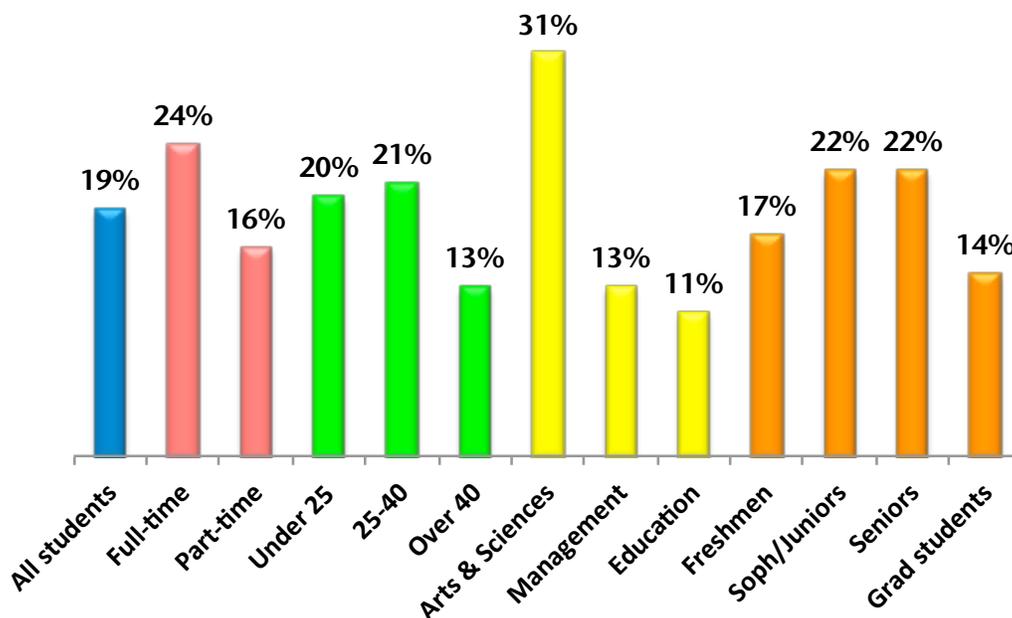
- When asked why they chose to attend UAS, the most popular responses included online/distance courses (48 percent), low tuition cost (36 percent), could live at home (36 percent), Alaska location/beautiful campus (35 percent), specific program/class (32 percent), and small campus (28 percent).
- When asked what they liked most about UAS, the number one answer was ability to take classes online at 36 percent, followed by instructors/professors at 18 percent and affordability at 11 percent. The question

was not open-ended; students were given eight options based on results from the 2009 survey, plus a write-in response option. Interestingly, when the question was completely open-ended in 2009, the most common responses referred to instructors. When shown a list of options in 2012, the most common response changed to online/distance courses.

One out of five students say they are likely to transfer to a different school to complete their degree. The most common reasons are that desired courses and programs are not offered at UAS.

- Nineteen percent of current students say they are likely (8 percent) or very likely (11 percent) to transfer to a different school to complete their degree. Full-time students are more likely to plan to transfer (24 percent) than part-time students (16 percent). School of Arts and Sciences students are also more likely to plan on transferring (31 percent).
- The percentage of full-time time students planning to transfer stayed the same between 2009 and 2012, although those *very likely* to transfer rose from 13 to 17 percent, and the percentage who were *likely* dropped from 11 to 7 percent.
- The most common reasons for transferring included: desired courses not offered at UAS (55 percent), degree/certificate program not offered at UAS (54 percent), want school with more classes available (38 percent), want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska (28 percent), better course scheduling elsewhere (22 percent), personal/family reasons (18 percent), and social reasons/campus life (18 percent). The quality of faculty and/or education was rarely mentioned as a reason for transferring.

Percent of Students Likely or Very Likely to Transfer to Another School



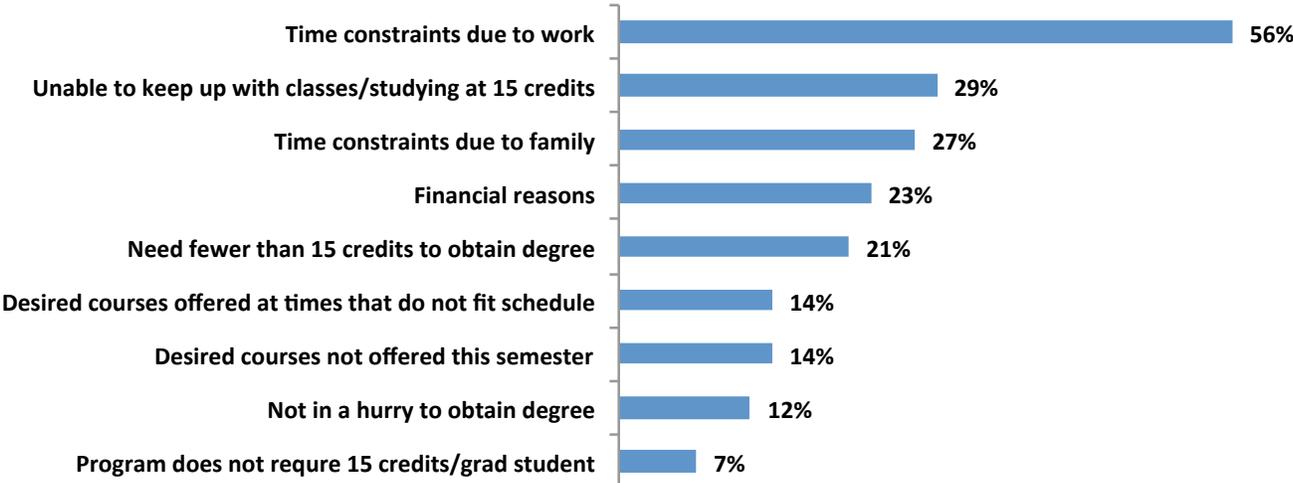
- Among students unlikely to transfer, 8 percent said they were likely to withdraw from UAS before completing their degree. (This equates to 6 percent of the entire sample.) The most common reasons were financial, need a break, and too busy.

- While the percentage of full-time students who said they were likely to withdraw increased between 2009 and 2012 (from 2 to 7 percent), it is likely due to a change in question wording (the phrase “even temporarily” was added in order to capture all potential withdrawals).

Among students enrolled in less than 15 credits, over half cited time constraints due to work as their reason. Other popular responses included unable to keep up with classes/studying, time constraints due to family, and financial reasons.

- Part-time students were more likely than full-time students to cite time constraints due to work (59 versus 51 percent), while full-time students were more likely to cite financial reasons (27 versus 21 percent).

**What are the main reasons you are not enrolled in 15 credits this semester?
Base: Not enrolled in 15 credits**



Over half of UAS students (59 percent) either know what job they want after obtaining their degree, or they are already in their chosen job/career.

- Students were asked to select from among five statements regarding their post-graduate plans. The most commonly chosen response was “I know what job/career I want after obtaining my degree/certificate” at 39 percent, followed by “I am considering several potential jobs/careers” (21 percent) and “I am already in my chosen job/career” (20 percent). Thirteen percent plan on additional study, and 5 percent do not have any specific jobs/careers or additional study in mind.
- Students planning to transfer or withdraw were less likely to already be in their chosen field, and were more likely to not have any specific plan.

Which of the following best describes your current career/educational plans?



Survey of Transferred/Withdrawn Students

The survey of transferred/withdrawn students was conducted via email and telephone of 205 students who had attended UAS within the last five years. Nearly three-quarters of those contacted had withdrawn from UAS, while 27 percent had transferred to another school.

- When asked why they left UAS, withdrawn students most commonly cited financial reasons (37 percent), personal/family reasons (30 percent), and busy schedule (26 percent) as their reasons for leaving UAS. Transfer students most commonly cited degree program not available (46 percent), wanted to leave the area (25 percent), and desired courses not available (20 percent).
- Both withdrawn and transferred students gave high satisfaction ratings to their UAS experience. Those satisfied with their overall educational experience included 89 percent of withdrawn students and 93 percent of transferred students. The highest-rated aspects among both withdrawn and transferred students were quality of instructors/professors and UAS staff responsiveness. The lowest-rated aspects among withdrawn students were course availability and career counseling; the lowest-rated aspects among transferred students were variety of degree programs and variety of courses.
- Nearly half of transferred students were in a degree program related to the program they pursued at UAS. Among these students, four out of five said most or all of their credits transferred to their new school.

Discussion Groups

Two discussion groups were held with current UAS students in April 2012, one on the Juneau campus with 14 degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled in three to 14 credits primarily at the Juneau campus; the second via teleconference with six degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled in three to 14 credits who live in communities without a UA campus.

- Many comments in both discussion groups reflected sentiments expressed in the current student survey: overall satisfaction with classes and faculty, and frustration with class scheduling (day-to-day) and availability (each semester).
- Many students at the on-campus discussion group resented the push to “Finish in Four.” They felt they were progressing as quickly as possible considering their personal obligations, finances, and the lack of availability of courses.
- Students in both groups expressed frustration with the difficulty in transferring credits, both from and to other schools.
- The students in remote locations very much appreciated UAS’ distance program. They compared it favorably to other schools’ programs and were grateful for the opportunity to pursue their education without disrupting their home and work life.

Conclusions

Overall satisfaction continues to be high among UAS students. While ratings were generally similar between 2009 and 2012, there was less of a gap between full and part-time students in 2012, both in terms of overall satisfaction, and by individual category. (In 2009, part-time students tended to be more satisfied than full-time students.) While the definition of part-time changed between the two survey years, it appears that UAS is delivering a more consistently satisfactory experience to the two groups. There were also fewer ratings gaps among age groups, schools, and class levels compared to 2009. **UAS has made progress towards delivering a satisfactory educational experience for all student groups, and should continue to work towards this goal.**

The 2012 survey revealed that students are more dissatisfied with the availability of courses on a semester/annual basis than they are with the scheduling of courses on a daily/weekly basis. (These categories were essentially combined in 2009 into the category “schedule/availability of courses”.) Twice as many students were dissatisfied with the availability of courses as those dissatisfied with the day-to-day course schedule (26 versus 13 percent). Course availability also ranked third in importance out of 16 aspects of UAS, among current students. **The issue of course availability arose repeatedly throughout both surveys as well as in the on-campus discussion group, and should be a focal point for UAS in efforts to improve student retention.**

Distance courses were a major theme in the 2012 survey of current students. It was the number one most-liked aspect of UAS, and the number one reason that students chose to attend UAS. These results differed from the 2009 survey, when the most-liked question was open-ended (resulting in more responses related to professors), and the option of “offered online/distance courses” was not offered as a reason for attending UAS (instead it was coded as an “other”). Further, survey results showed that distance students are equally as satisfied as traditional students, both overall and for individual categories. (The 2009 survey did not allow for comparison between distance and traditional students.) Distance students who participated in the discussion group were hugely appreciative of their ability to take classes without compromising their family and work situations. **UAS should be cognizant of the immense value of their distance programs in efforts to recruit and retain students.**

Students who are not enrolled in 15 credits usually have very good reasons, most often involving work, family, and financial considerations. In addition, some students could not get the classes they wanted because of course schedule or availability. The students in the on-campus discussion group were resistant to the push to “finish in four” for these reasons, and some even resented the administration’s focus on increasing class loads. **UAS should keep these barriers in mind when training advisors and creating marketing campaigns centered around graduating earlier and/or increasing credits.**

Introduction and Methodology

Introduction

The University of Alaska Southeast contracted with McDowell Group, a Juneau-based research and consulting firm, to conduct a study of student retention in spring 2012. The study incorporates three research efforts: a survey of current students, a survey of former students, and discussion groups with current students. The surveys and discussion groups addressed issues surrounding student satisfaction, reasons for attending UAS, transferring to other schools, withdrawing from UAS, academic preparedness, and advising, among other subjects. The surveys were largely modeled on a similar study conducted by McDowell Group in 2009.

Methodology

Survey of Current Students

An online survey of current students was conducted in April 2012. The survey was designed by McDowell Group in cooperation with UAS staff. To qualify for the survey, students had to be taking three or more credits, and they had to be degree-seeking. Students who were in the “professional education” category were excluded; 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 1,824 qualified students, with one reminder email sent a week after the survey launch. An incentive was offered to encourage 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 594 respondents, or 33 percent of qualified students.

Each postcard and email contained a unique password link for each student, which was later used to match survey data with the student’s UAS record. This allowed 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 was minimized. 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 594, the maximum margin of error for the total sample is ± 3.3 percent. The margin of error increases for sub-groups as sample sizes get smaller. A copy of the survey instrument is attached.

Where possible, survey results for 2012 are compared to survey results from 2009. The samples differed in two important ways however: the 2009 sample included non-degree-seekers, and did not include students enrolled in three to five credits only. (The change in sample definition was deliberate.) It is therefore difficult

to make direct comparisons between the “Total Students” samples from 2009 and 2012. Instead, this report includes comparisons between the full-time samples only, as the characteristics of this population did not change between the two survey years.

Survey of Transferred/Withdrawn Students

The survey of transferred and withdrawn students was conducted in April and May 2012, and was designed by the study team in cooperation with UAS staff. 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) dated, the study team utilized both online and telephone methods to reach respondents. A total of 205 surveys of former students were completed (70 surveys were completed via telephone and 135 were completed online by former students who received an e-mail invitation to participate in the survey). 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 April 2012. One group consisted of 14 students who attended most of their classes in-person at the Juneau campus, were enrolled in between three and 14 credits, and were not employed by UAS. The second group consisted of six students who took all of their credits via eLearning, lived in communities without a UA campus, were enrolled in between three and 14 credits, and were not employed by UAS. The study team recruited respondents via email. Students were given a \$25 honorarium for participating. The first discussion group addressed course availability, engagement in campus life, advising, faculty, and reasons for not enrolling in more credits. The second discussion group focused on issues for distance students such as technology, accessibility, and advising.

Survey of Current Students

Following are the results of the online survey of current UAS students. All degree-seeking students registered for three or more credits received the survey; of these 1,824 students, 594 (33 percent) responded. Results are presented in terms of the total sample, full-time students, and part-time students.

Satisfaction

Overall Satisfaction

Nearly nine out of ten UAS students are satisfied with their overall educational experience. Full-time students' satisfaction has increased slightly since 2009.

- The vast majority of UAS students (84 percent) expressed satisfaction with their educational experience, including 34 percent who are very satisfied and 50 percent who are satisfied. Only 5 percent said they were dissatisfied. Part-time students gave responses similar to those of full-time students.
- The percent of full-time students who were very satisfied increased from 30 percent in 2009 to 35 percent in 2012. Other shifts were negligible. (Because the part-time sample was defined differently in 2009, comparative results for all students and part-time students are not provided.)

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

	All Students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Very satisfied	34%	35%	32%
Satisfied	50	47	52
Neutral	11	12	11
Dissatisfied	4	5	3
Very dissatisfied	1	1	1

- Satisfaction was generally consistent among the various sub-groups. Following are satisfaction rates (satisfied plus very satisfied) by sub-group. The only statistically significant difference among subgroups was by school: those in the School of Arts and Sciences were slightly less satisfied.
 - AGE - Under 25: 83 percent; 25 to 39: 83 percent; 40 and over: 85 percent.
 - SCHOOL - Arts and Sciences: 79 percent; Management: 87 percent; Education: 86 percent; Career Education: 86 percent. (Note: Career Education students were more likely to be very satisfied at 43 percent, compared to 37 percent of Management and 29 percent of both Arts and Sciences and Education students.)
 - CLASS - Freshmen: 82 percent; Sophomores/Juniors: 80 percent; Seniors: 87 percent; Graduate students: 87 percent.

- CAMPUS - Juneau: 84 percent; Ketchikan/Sitka: 80 percent. (Note: the Ketchikan and Sitka samples were combined because their individual sample sizes were too small for analysis.)
 - TRADITIONAL VERSUS DISTANCE – Traditional: 83 percent; Distance: 84 percent.
 - GENDER - Male: 80 percent; Female: 85 percent.
 - ORIGIN AT ENTRY - In-State: 83 percent; Out-of-State: 88 percent.
- Students who said they were likely to withdraw or transfer (asked later in the survey) reported lower satisfaction ratings (19 percent very satisfied) than those who were unlikely to withdraw or transfer (39 percent very satisfied). However, even among those planning to leave UAS, over two-thirds (68 percent) were satisfied, and only 11 percent were dissatisfied.

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

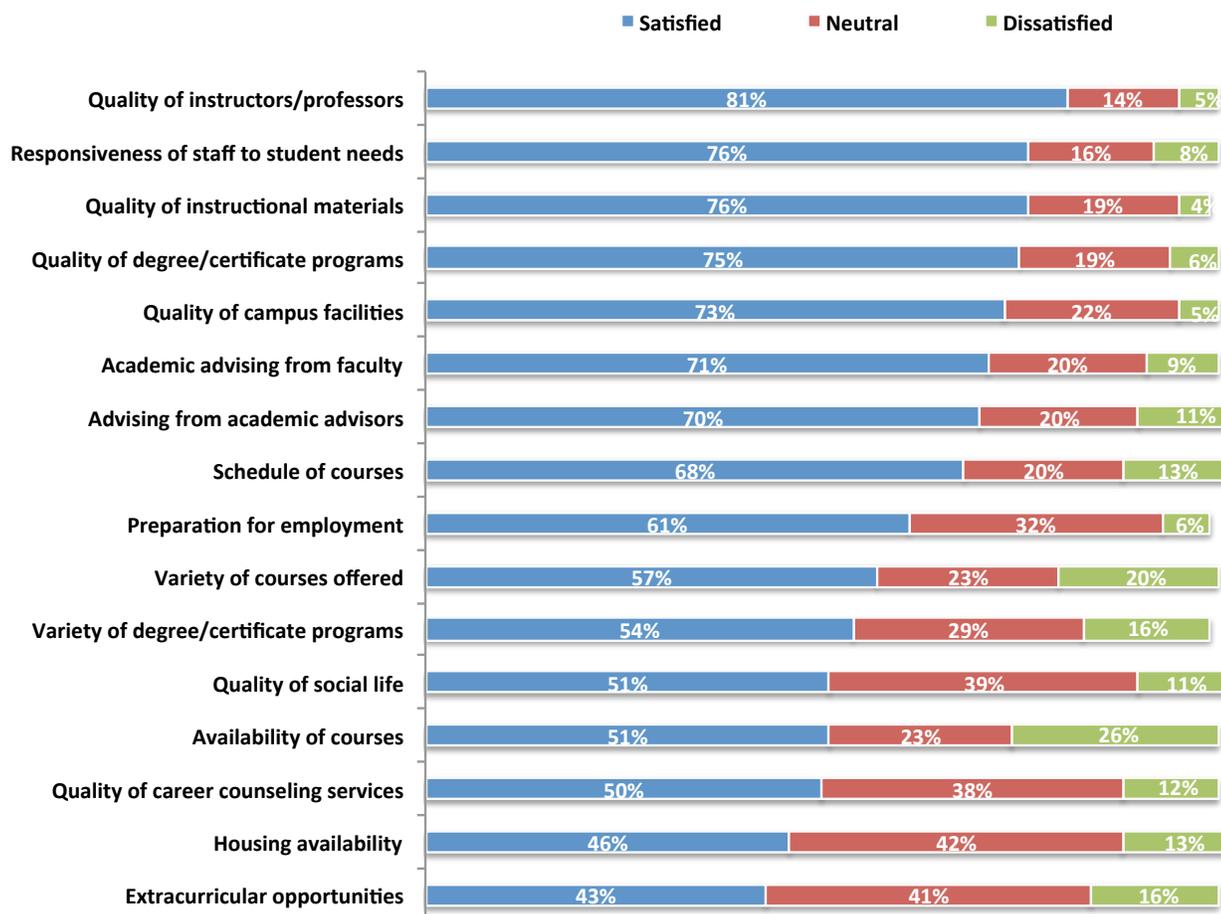
	Likely to Withdraw/ Transfer n=149	Unlikely to Withdraw/ Transfer n=445
Very satisfied	19%	39%
Satisfied	49	50
Neutral	21	8
Dissatisfied	8	3
Very dissatisfied	3	<1

Satisfaction with Specific Areas: Summary Results

The top-rated aspect of UAS is the quality of instructors/professors, followed by staff responsiveness, quality of instructional materials, and quality of degree/certificate programs. The lowest-rated aspects were availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.) and variety of courses offered.

- The top-rated aspects of UAS were: quality of instructors/professors (81 percent satisfied); quality of instructional materials (76 percent satisfied); and overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs (76 percent satisfied). Only 5 to 8 percent were dissatisfied with these categories.
- The categories receiving the most dissatisfied ratings were availability of courses offered (26 percent dissatisfied); variety of courses offered (20 percent dissatisfied); variety of degree/certificate programs (16 percent dissatisfied); and extracurricular opportunities (16 percent dissatisfied).
- It is likely that many “neutral” responses were due to the respondent not using that service; for example, 42 percent were neutral on housing availability.

Satisfaction with Specific Areas: Summary Results



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. As indicated in the survey instrument, “schedule of courses” refers to time of day/day of week, while “availability of courses” refers to each semester, annually, etc.

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 add to 100 percent only 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.

- Advising from academic advisors earned the most *very satisfied* ratings (32 percent), followed by academic advising from faculty (31 percent), quality of instructors/professors (30 percent), and UAS staff responsiveness (30 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 (38 versus 64 percent satisfied or very satisfied); schedule of courses (53 versus 72 percent); availability of courses (37 versus 56 percent); quality of degree programs (58 versus 81 percent); variety of degree/certificate programs (32 versus 62 percent); and preparation for employment (47 versus 66 percent).
- Unlike in 2009, satisfaction ratings in 2012 were fairly consistent across sub-groups. Full and part-time students tended to give similar ratings, as did traditional and distance students, different age groups, and different classes (freshmen, sophomores, etc.). The few statistically significant differences by subgroup included:
 - Management students were more satisfied with the following categories: variety of courses offered (65 percent, versus 53 percent of Arts and Sciences students, and 56 percent of both Education and Career Education students); variety of degree/certificate programs (63 percent, versus 51 percent of Arts and Sciences, 50 percent of Education, and 53 percent of Career Education students); availability of courses (61 percent, versus 46 percent of Arts and Sciences, 47 percent of Education, and 52 percent of Career Education students); preparation for employment (69 percent, versus 64 percent of Education, 63 percent of Career Education, and 55 percent of Arts and Sciences students); and extracurricular opportunities (52 percent, versus 46 percent of Arts and Sciences, 36 percent of Education, and 33 percent of Career Education students).
 - Students under 25 years old were more satisfied with housing availability (53 percent, versus 45 percent of those 40 and older and 37 percent of those 25-39).
 - Students originating from in-state were more satisfied with the variety of courses offered (59 versus 45 percent of those from out-of-state).
- Satisfaction among full-time students was generally similar between the 2009 and 2012 surveys. Satisfaction with housing availability dropped from 51 to 43 percent very satisfied, and satisfaction with

social life dropped from 60 to 48 percent very satisfied. Satisfaction with variety of degree programs increased from 46 to 53 percent.

- Other changes in satisfaction among full-time students between 2009 and 2012 were within a few percentage points, or the wording changed between the two years, preventing direct comparison.
 - “Academic advising from Student Resources Center” was changed to “Advising from academic advisors” (because not all UAS campuses have an SRC). Full-time students satisfied with this category increased from 59 percent in 2009 to 73 percent in 2012, but the change could be attributable to the difference in wording.
 - “Schedule/availability of courses offered” was split into two categories in 2012: schedule of courses (time of day/day of week) and availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.). In 2009, 47 percent of full-time students were satisfied with schedule/availability of courses. In 2012, 58 percent of full-time students were satisfied with the schedule of courses, and 50 percent were satisfied with the availability of courses.

Please see the section “Comparison to 2009 Survey” at the end of the report for detailed tables showing 2009 and 2012 results.

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

	All Students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Advising from academic advisors			
Very satisfied	32%	31%	33%
Satisfied	38	42	35
Neutral	20	20	19
Dissatisfied	9	6	11
Very dissatisfied	2	1	3
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	10	9	11
Academic advising from faculty			
Very satisfied	31%	28%	33%
Satisfied	40	41	39
Neutral	20	20	20
Dissatisfied	7	9	6
Very dissatisfied	2	2	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	10	7	12
Quality of instructors/professors			
Very satisfied	30%	31%	29%
Satisfied	51	50	53
Neutral	14	14	14
Dissatisfied	4	3	4
Very dissatisfied	1	2	1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	<1	-	<1
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs			
Very satisfied	30%	31%	30%
Satisfied	46	45	47
Neutral	16	17	16
Dissatisfied	5	5	4
Very dissatisfied	3	2	3
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	2	1	2
Quality of degree/certificate programs			
Very satisfied	27%	25%	29%
Satisfied	48	47	48
Neutral	19	21	17
Dissatisfied	4	6	3
Very dissatisfied	2	2	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	1	1

Table continued

	All Students	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students
Quality of campus facilities			
Very satisfied	24%	25%	23%
Satisfied	49	47	50
Neutral	22	21	22
Dissatisfied	4	6	2
Very dissatisfied	1	1	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	30	27	31
Schedule of courses (time of day/day of week)			
Very satisfied	23%	22%	23%
Satisfied	45	46	44
Neutral	20	19	20
Dissatisfied	10	10	10
Very dissatisfied	3	2	3
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	3	3	3
Quality of instructional materials			
Very satisfied	20%	18%	22%
Satisfied	56	55	56
Neutral	19	22	18
Dissatisfied	3	4	3
Very dissatisfied	1	1	1
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	1	1
Quality of career counseling services			
Very satisfied	18%	17%	19%
Satisfied	32	28	35
Neutral	38	42	36
Dissatisfied	8	10	7
Very dissatisfied	4	3	4
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	43	39	46
Housing availability			
Very satisfied	17%	15%	18%
Satisfied	29	28	30
Neutral	42	47	38
Dissatisfied	9	8	10
Very dissatisfied	4	3	4
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	57	52	61
Preparation for employment			
Very satisfied	17%	15%	19%
Satisfied	44	43	45
Neutral	32	37	29
Dissatisfied	5	4	5
Very dissatisfied	1	<1	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	16	16	16

Table continued

	All Students	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students
Variety of degree/certificate programs			
Very satisfied	16%	16%	16%
Satisfied	38	37	39
Neutral	29	29	29
Dissatisfied	13	14	12
Very dissatisfied	3	4	3
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	5	4	6
Variety of courses offered			
Very satisfied	15%	12%	17%
Satisfied	42	43	42
Neutral	23	26	21
Dissatisfied	16	17	15
Very dissatisfied	4	3	5
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	3	3	3
Quality of social life			
Very satisfied	15%	16%	14%
Satisfied	36	32	39
Neutral	39	40	37
Dissatisfied	9	11	8
Very dissatisfied	2	2	2
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	40	34	44
Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)			
Very satisfied	14%	10%	17%
Satisfied	37	40	35
Neutral	23	24	22
Dissatisfied	19	20	19
Very dissatisfied	7	5	7
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	1	1	<1
Extracurricular opportunities			
Very satisfied	12%	12%	11%
Satisfied	31	26	36
Neutral	41	45	38
Dissatisfied	12	16	9
Very dissatisfied	4	2	5
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	45	40	48

Importance of Specific Areas: Summary Results

Quality of instructors/professors was rated the most important aspect of UAS, with 92 percent saying it is very important, followed by quality of degree/certificate programs, availability of courses, and UAS staff responsiveness.

- Three categories received relatively high numbers of “not important” ratings: quality of social life (33 percent not important), extracurricular opportunities (32 percent not important), and housing availability (31 percent not important).
- Several categories earned both high satisfaction ratings and high importance ratings: quality of instructors/professors (92 percent very important, 81 percent satisfied); quality of degree/certificate programs (83 percent very important, 75 percent satisfied); responsiveness of UAS staff (76 percent very important, 76 percent satisfied); and quality of instructional materials (74 percent very important, 76 percent satisfied).
- Two categories were considered very important, but earned comparatively low satisfaction ratings: availability of courses (81 percent very important, 51 percent satisfied); and variety of courses offered (71 percent very important, 57 percent satisfied).

Summary Table: Importance of Specific Areas

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Quality of instructors/professors	92%	8%	-%
Quality of degree/certificate programs	83	16	1
Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)	81	18	1
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	76	23	1
Quality of instructional materials	74	25	1
Schedule of courses (time of day/day of week)	71	26	3
Variety of courses offered	71	28	1
Preparation for employment	67	28	5
Academic advising from faculty	62	35	4
Advising from academic advisors	62	33	4
Variety of degree/certificate programs	59	35	6
Quality of campus facilities	49	43	8
Quality of career counseling services	44	44	12
Housing availability	36	34	31
Extracurricular opportunities	27	41	32
Quality of social life	24	43	33

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.

- Part-time and full-time students gave similar importance ratings. The only statistically significant difference was in availability of courses, which was very important for 85 percent of part-time students, versus 76 percent of full-time students.
- Those who were likely to transfer or withdraw from UAS gave higher importance ratings to variety of degree/certificate programs (64 percent very important, versus 57 percent of those unlikely to withdraw or transfer). They gave lower importance ratings to quality of degree/certificate programs (76 percent very important versus 86 percent of those unlikely to withdraw or transfer). Otherwise ratings were similar between the two groups
- As with the satisfaction ratings, sub-groups tended to give similar importance ratings. Following are the few statistically significant differences.
 - Education students ranked extracurricular opportunities as less important: 17 percent rated it very important, compared to 26 percent of Career Education, 30 percent of Management, and 31 percent of Arts and Sciences students.
 - Importance of variety of courses offered increased with class level: from 65 percent very important among freshmen, to 70 percent among sophomores/juniors, to 74 percent among seniors, to 78 percent among graduate students.
 - Schedule of courses was more important to Ketchikan/Sitka students (83 percent very important) than to Juneau students (69 percent).
 - The importance of academic advisors increased with age: from 57 percent very important among those under 25, to 64 percent among those 25 to 39, to 71 percent among those 40 and over.
 - The importance of academic advisors was higher among seniors and graduate students (72 and 65 percent very important, respectively) compared to freshmen (59 percent) and sophomores (58 percent).
 - The importance of UAS staff responsiveness was highest among seniors (86 percent very important) followed by sophomores/juniors (75 percent), freshmen (74 percent), and graduate students (71 percent).
 - Women gave higher importance ratings to quality of social life (27 percent very important, versus 18 percent among men).
 - Students from out-of-state gave higher importance ratings to housing availability (54 percent very important versus 33 percent among those from in-state).

- There were minimal shifts in “very important” ratings among full-time students between 2009 and 2012: UAS staff responsiveness (from 69 to 75 percent); instructional materials (from 61 to 71 percent); preparation for employment (from 59 to 64 percent); quality of career counseling services (from 34 to 41 percent); and variety of courses offered (from 73 to 68 percent). See section “Comparison to 2009 Survey” for more detailed results.

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

	All Students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Quality of instructors/professors			
Very important	92%	91%	93%
Somewhat important	8	9	7
Not important	-	-	-
Don't know/do not use	<1	-	<1
Quality of degree/certificate programs			
Very important	83%	81%	85%
Somewhat important	16	19	15
Not important	1	<1	1
Don't know/do not use	1	<1	1
Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)			
Very important	81%	76%	85%
Somewhat important	18	23	15
Not important	1	1	<1
Don't know/do not use	1	<1	1
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs			
Very important	76%	75%	77%
Somewhat important	23	24	22
Not important	1	1	1
Don't know/do not use	2	1	2
Quality of instructional materials			
Very important	74%	71%	77%
Somewhat important	25	28	22
Not important	1	2	1
Don't know/do not use	1	1	1
Variety of courses offered			
Very important	71%	68%	73%
Somewhat important	27	31	25
Not important	1	1	1
Don't know/do not use	2	1	2
Schedule of courses (time of day/day of week)			
Very important	71%	68%	73%
Somewhat important	26	29	24
Not important	3	4	3
Don't know/do not use	1	1	1

	All Students	Full-Time Students	Part-Time Students
Preparation for employment			
Very important	67%	64%	68%
Somewhat important	28	30	26
Not important	5	6	5
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	9	7	11
Academic advising from faculty			
Very important	62%	58%	54%
Somewhat important	35	39	31
Not important	4	3	5
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	7	7	7
Advising from academic advisors			
Very important	62%	61%	63%
Somewhat important	33	34	33
Not important	4	5	4
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	7	5	8
Variety of degree/certificate programs			
Very important	59%	59%	59%
Somewhat important	35	35	34
Not important	6	6	7
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	3	2	4
Quality of campus facilities			
Very important	49%	48%	50%
Somewhat important	43	43	43
Not important	8	9	8
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	28	25	30
Quality of career counseling services			
Very important	44%	41%	46%
Somewhat important	44	47	42
Not important	12	12	12
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	26	22	28
Housing availability			
Very important	36%	38%	34%
Somewhat important	34	32	35
Not important	31	30	31
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	55	51	58
Quality of social life			
Very important	24%	25%	24%
Somewhat important	43	43	43
Not important	33	32	33
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	36	33	38
Extracurricular opportunities			
Very important	27%	24%	30%
Somewhat important	41	43	39
Not important	32	32	32
<i>Don't know/do not use</i>	39	33	43

UAS Compared to Other Colleges

Over one-quarter of UAS students think that the overall quality of education at UAS is better than similar-sized colleges in the Lower 48, and another 33 percent think it is about the same. Just 7 percent say it is worse.

- Combined, 61 percent of UAS students say that the quality of education at UAS is about the same as or better compared to similar sized colleges in the Lower 48. One-third of respondents said they didn't know.
- Responses were fairly consistent across sub-groups, with a few exceptions. Students in the School of Management were less likely to say UAS was better at 21 percent, compared to 28 percent of Career Education, 30 percent of Education, and 32 percent of Arts and Sciences students. Students likely to transfer or withdraw were more likely to say it was worse (14 vs. 4 percent).
- Slightly more full-time students responded with "better" in 2012 (29 percent) compared to 2009 (25 percent). However, the percentage responding "worse" also increased, from 4 percent in 2009 to 7 percent in 2012. The percentage responding "about the same" dropped from 41 to 33 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=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Better	28%	29%	27%
About the same	33	33	33
Worse	7	7	7
Don't know	32	31	33

Likes and Dislikes

The number one most-liked aspect of UAS is ability to take courses online, followed by instructors/professors. The biggest complaints referred to course availability and scheduling.

- Students were given eight response options reflecting the major themes from the 2009 survey (in which the question was open-ended), plus an “other” category. The most popular response was ability to take courses online (36 percent) followed by instructors/professors (18 percent), then affordability (11 percent).
- Responses were not reported in terms of percentage in the 2009 survey because the question was completely open-ended. The difference in survey format appears to have caused more students to select online courses as their most-liked aspect; in 2009, the largest number of responses referred to instructors/professors.

What do you like most about UAS?

	All students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Ability to take courses online	36%	32%	38%
Instructors/professors	18	21	17
Affordability	11	13	10
Small classes	9	9	8
Beautiful location	8	10	6
Sense of community	6	3	8
Small campus	5	3	6
University staff	3	3	3
Other	4	5	3
Don't know	1	2	<1

- When students were asked what they liked least about UAS, responses could be categorized into several areas. The two categories with the greatest number of responses had to do with course availability and scheduling, and faculty/administration. Although the complaints about the faculty, staff and administration were varied, some of the common themes included:
 - A perceived lack of motivation, consistency and commitment by professors
 - Lack of timely responsiveness from staff and administration
 - Bureaucracy and lack of communication between departments
- Complaints about course availability and scheduling were more consistent and similar to the issues raised in the 2009 survey:
 - Required courses not offered often enough for students to graduate in four years
 - Limited course and program options and availability each semester

- Overlapping and inconvenient class times creating scheduling difficulties
- Students also criticized the lack of degrees (along with course options) available at the UAS campus and the cutting of the Early Childhood Education program. Several students also commented on the difficulty in transferring classes and credits between campuses in the UA system. Specific classes and programs were also mentioned: the art department was thought to be too small (lacking space); neither economics, language or music courses were offered; and there were limited graduate courses.
- Several students commented on the limited variety and availability of distance delivery and online courses. Some respondents preferred actual classes to online delivery of courses; others favored the flexibility of online classes to better fit their schedules.
- There were several complaints about academic advising, mainly concerning the lack of communication and contact by advisors with students.
- There were just a few student complaints about technology: glitches with the server and technical difficulties with several of the UA software programs (Illuminate, Blackboard).
- The rising cost of tuition, student fees, and the difficulty in dealing with the financial aid office were mentioned as problems. One student noted that there were not enough scholarships available.
- A number of students complained about the cafeteria – the quality of the food, service, high prices, and limited food options. Several students mentioned the lack of a community feel or excitement on campus and the lack of extracurricular activity options or sports teams.

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

	All students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Course availability and scheduling	13%	12%	14%
Faculty/staff	8	10	7
Degree availability	5	6	5
Campus life	5	5	5
Cost/financing	3	4	3
Specific classes/programs/distance delivery	2	2	2
Academic advising	2	1	1
Technology	1	1	1
Nothing	26	23	27
Other	10	10	10
Don't know	25	25	24

Academic Preparedness

Nine out of ten 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.

- Over one-third of students felt very prepared academically when they started classes at UAS, and another 52 percent felt prepared. Eleven percent felt either unprepared or very unprepared.
- There were no statistically significant differences in responses among sub-groups.
- Among full-time students, the percentage feeling *very prepared* stayed the same between 2009 and 2012, but the percentage feeling *prepared* increased from 47 percent to 55 percent. Those feeling *unprepared* or *very unprepared* dropped from 18 to 11 percent.

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

	All Students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Very prepared	35%	33%	36%
Prepared	52	55	50
Unprepared	8	7	8
Very unprepared	3	4	3
Don't know	2	1	3

- The most common subject where students felt unprepared was math, followed by English/writing, life skills (time management, money management, organization), science, reading/comprehension, and computer skills. Small sample sizes prevent comparison among sub-groups and with 2009 results.

In which areas did you feel unprepared?

Base: Unprepared or very unprepared

	All Students n=64	Full-Time Students n=26	Part-Time Students n=38
Math	56%	50%	61%
English/writing	50	38	58
Life skills (time management, money management, organization)	48	58	42
Science	30	19	37
Reading/comprehension	16	12	18
Computer skills	9	8	11
Other	2	4	-

Reasons for Attending UAS

The most popular reason for attending UAS is the online/distance course option, followed by low tuition cost, the ability to live at home, and Alaska location/beautiful campus.

- Nearly half of students said they chose to attend UAS because it offered online/distance courses. Other popular reasons for attending UAS included low tuition cost (36 percent), could live at home (36 percent), Alaska location, beautiful campus (35 percent), and specific program/class (32 percent).
- School of Management students were much more likely to mention online courses, and less likely to mention Alaska location/beautiful campus or small campus. Arts and Sciences students were more likely to mention low tuition cost, Alaska location/beautiful campus, and inexpensive method for completing requirements. School of Career Education students were more likely to mention specific program/class.
- Those likely to transfer or withdraw were less likely to cite online/distance courses or specific program/class, and more likely to mention low tuition cost, Alaska location/beautiful campus, and small campus.

Why did you choose to attend UAS?

	All Students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Offered online/distance courses	48%	45%	51%
Low tuition cost	36	37	35
Could live at home	36	37	34
Alaska location, beautiful campus	35	35	34
Specific program/class	32	28	34
Small campus	28	28	28
It's the only option in Juneau/Ketchikan/Sitka	24	22	26
Inexpensive method for completing undergraduate general requirements	22	24	20
Access to financing or scholarship	20	23	19
Recommendation by friends or family	19	19	18
Open enrollment	13	14	12
Reputation of degree/certificate programs	12	15	10
Requirement for work/job training	5	5	5
Recommendation by high school teacher/counselor/coach	4	6	3
Publications and brochures received from UAS	4	5	3
Recruited by UAS representative	3	5	1
Other	10	7	13

- Compared to 2009, full-time students in 2012 were less likely to mention low tuition cost (dropping from 51 to 37 percent) and Alaska location/beautiful campus (dropping from 49 to 35 percent). The percentage mentioning small campus also dropped, from 41 to 28 percent. While the percentage mentioning online/distance courses and specific program/class increased dramatically, this is due to the

fact that these two responses codes were added to the list of options in 2012, whereas they were entered as “other” responses in 2009.

- When asked for their most important reason for attending UAS, the top three responses remained the same: online/distance courses, low tuition, and ability to live at home.
- Full-time students were more likely than part-time students to cite the option to live at home (16 versus 9 percent).

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

	All Students n=471	Full-Time Students n=192	Part-Time Students n=279
Offered online/distance courses	25%	22%	27%
Low tuition cost	13	14	12
Could live at home	12	16	9
Specific program/class	11	11	12
It’s the only option in Juneau/Ketchikan/Sitka	7	4	8
Access to financing or scholarship	6	6	6
Alaska location, beautiful campus	5	5	5
Inexpensive method for completing undergraduate general requirements	4	5	4
Small campus	3	3	4
Recommendation by friends or family	3	2	3
Requirement for work/job training	2	2	2
Reputation for degree/certificate programs	1	3	1
Open enrollment	1	2	<1
Recommendation by high school teacher/counselor/coach	<1	1	-
Recruited by UAS representative	<1	-	<1
Publications and brochures received from UAS	-	-	-
Other	7	6	8

Transferring from UAS

One out of five students are likely to transfer to a different school before completing their degree. Full-time students are more likely than part-time students to say they will transfer.

- Nineteen 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 16 percent of part-time students. Part-time students more commonly said they were very unlikely to transfer at 58 percent, compared to 48 percent of full-time students.
- School of Arts and Sciences students were more likely to plan on transferring at 31 percent, compared to 13 percent of School of Management students, 13 percent of School of Education students, and 10 percent of School of Career Education students.
- The percentage of full-time students who said they were likely or very likely to transfer stayed exactly the same between 2009 and 2012 at 24 percent. The percentage *very likely* to transfer rose slightly from 13 to 17 percent, while the percentage *likely* to transfer dropped from 11 to 7 percent.

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

	All Students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Very likely	11%	17%	8%
Likely	8	7	8
Unlikely	19	20	19
Very unlikely	54	48	58
Don't know	8	8	8

The most common reasons for planning to transfer from UAS were “desired courses not offered” and “degree/certificate program not offered.”

- Over half of students likely to transfer cited that their desired courses and/or desired degree/certificate program were not offered by UAS. A related reason, “want school with more classes available,” was cited by 38 percent of students. Over one-quarter (28 percent) said they wanted to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska, and slightly fewer (22 percent) said there was better course scheduling elsewhere.
- Part-time students were more likely to cite “better course scheduling elsewhere” (32 percent, versus 12 percent of full-time students). Full-time students were more likely to cite social reasons/campus life (24 percent, versus 11 percent of part-time students).
- The small sample size among full-time students prevents comparison with 2009 results.

Why do you plan to transfer from UAS?
Base: Likely or very likely to transfer

	All Students n=114	Full-Time Students n=58	Part-Time Students n=56
Desired courses not offered at UAS	55%	52%	59%
Degree/certificate program not offered at UAS	54	48	59
Want school with more classes available	38	34	41
Want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska	28	24	32
Better course scheduling elsewhere	22	12	32
Personal/family reasons	18	14	21
Social reasons/campus life	18	24	11
Want school with more people	12	17	7
Want school with better academic reputation	9	7	11
Want to be closer to home	9	12	5
Financial reasons	6	5	7
Faculty is better elsewhere	4	3	4
Other	7	7	7
Don't know	2	2	2

- One-third of students who said they were likely to transfer planned to attend either UAA (21 percent) or UAF (11 percent). Most other schools mentioned were located in Western states (see list below). Over one-third of students did not know where they would transfer.
- This question was not asked in 2009.

Where do you plan to transfer?
(Base: Likely or very likely to transfer)

	All students n=114	Full-Time Students n=58	Part-Time Students n=56
University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)	21%	24%	18%
University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)	11	9	13
University of Washington	3	-	5
Oregon State University	3	-	5
University of Oregon	1	2	-
Other	26	33	20
Don't know	36	33	39

Others

- Alaska Pacific University
- California Maritime Academy
- Canadian university
- Central Carolina Community College
- Gallaudet University
- Lewis and Clark State College, Idaho
- Liberty University
- Multnomah Bible College
- NAU, OSU, or, WSU
- NDSU or CMC
- Oregon State University
- Portland State University
- Shasta College
- Southern Alabama
- Southern Oregon University (3 responses)
- St Olaf
- Technical school
- To many schools
- University of Montana (2 responses)
- University of Portland
- University of Southern Oregon
- Walla Walla University
- Washington (somewhere in)
- Wenatchee Valley College
- Western Governors University
- WUE schools (looking at several)

Withdrawing from UAS

Only 8 percent of students (who were unlikely to transfer) said they were likely to withdraw from UAS before completing their degree. The most common reason for withdrawing is finances.

- Students who said they were unlikely to transfer were asked the likelihood of withdrawing. Eight percent said they were very likely or likely, while 87 percent said they were unlikely or very unlikely. Applied to the total sample of students, the percentage likely to withdraw changes to 6 percent.
- This question contains a slight modification from the 2009 survey: the phrase “even temporarily” was added in order to capture all students who might withdraw, even for a short time. In 2009, 2 percent of full-time students said they were likely or very likely to withdraw, compared with 7 percent in 2012. Those answering very unlikely dropped from 83 to 61 percent. The differences are likely due (at least in part) to the change in question wording.

How likely are you to withdraw – even temporarily – from UAS (without transferring to another school) before completing your degree/certificate?
Base: Unlikely to transfer

	All Students n=479	Full-Time Students n=185	Part-Time Students n=294
Very likely	3%	2%	3%
Likely	5	5	4
Unlikely	22	24	21
Very unlikely	65	61	67
Don't know	6	8	4

- Half of the 35 students who said they were likely or very likely to withdraw cited financial reasons, while over one-third said they needed a break, or their schedule was too busy to attend classes. Additional reasons cited included personal/family reasons (29 percent), burned out/lost interest (23 percent), not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors (14 percent), moving from Juneau/Southeast (6 percent), and not performing well academically (6 percent). Note the small sample size of 35 students, which prevents analysis by part-time and full-time students.

***Why do you think you might withdraw from UAS?
(Base: Likely or very likely to withdraw)***

	Likely to withdraw n=35
Financial reasons	49%
Need a break	37
Schedule too busy to attend classes	34
Personal/family reasons	29
Burned out/lost interest	23
Not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors	14
Moving from Juneau/Southeast	6
Not performing well academically	6
Other	23
Don't know	3

Reason for Not Enrolling in More Credits

The most common reason for not enrolling in more credits is time constraints due to work, accounting for over half of responses.

- After time constraints due to work (56 percent), the most common reasons for not enrolling in more credits included unable to keep up with classes/studying at 15 credits (29 percent), time constraints due to family (27 percent), and financial reasons (23 percent). Twenty-one percent said they needed fewer than 15 credits to obtain their degree/certificate. Fourteen percent said their desired courses did not fit their schedule, and another 14 percent said their desired courses were not offered this semester.
- This question was not asked in 2009.

*What are the main reasons you are not enrolled in 15 credits this semester?
(Base: Enrolled in less than 15 credits)*

	All students n=435	Full-Time Students n=165	Part-Time Students n=270
Time constraints due to work	56%	51%	59%
Unable to keep up with classes/studying at 15 credits	29	30	28
Time constraints due to family	27	26	28
Financial reasons	23	27	21
I need fewer than 15 credits to obtain my degree/certificate	21	18	23
Desired courses offered at times that do not fit my schedule	14	15	13
Desired courses not offered this semester	14	10	16
I am not in a hurry to obtain my degree/certificate	12	12	12
Program does not require 15 credits/ grad student	7	7	7
Other	9	11	9
Don't know	<1	1	<1

Post-Graduate Plans

Four out of ten students said “I know what job/career I want to pursue after obtaining my degree/certificate” while another 20 percent are already in their chosen job/career. Just 5 percent do not have any specific jobs or careers in mind.

- Students were asked to select from among five statements regarding their current career or educational plans. The most popular response was “I know what job/career I want to pursue...” followed by “I am considering several potential jobs/careers” (21 percent), “I am already in my chosen job/career” (20 percent), “I plan to pursue additional study after obtaining my degree/certificate” (13 percent). Only 5 percent said they do not have any specific jobs/careers or additional study in mind.
- School of Management students were more likely to state they were already in their chosen job (30 percent), compared to Education students (21 percent), Career Education students (23 percent), or Arts and Sciences students (10 percent). Arts and Sciences students were more likely to plan on additional study (17 percent, versus 8 percent of Management and 13 percent of Education students).
- Students planning to transfer or withdraw were less likely to already be in their chosen field (12 percent versus 22 percent of those unlikely to transfer/withdraw). They were three times as likely to not have any specific plan (9 versus 3 percent).
- Graduate students were the most likely to know what job they want after graduating at 47 percent. This compares to 43 percent of seniors, 31 percent of sophomores/juniors, and 40 percent of freshmen.
- This question was not asked in 2009.

Which of the following best describes your current career/education plans?

	All students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
I know what job/career I want to pursue after obtaining my degree/certificate	39%	37%	40%
I am considering several potential jobs/careers	21	24	19
I am already in my chosen job/career	20	17	21
I plan to pursue additional study after obtaining my degree/certificate	13	14	13
I do not have any specific jobs/careers or additional study in mind	5	5	5
Don't know	2	3	2

Practicums, Internships, and Undergraduate Research

Over one-quarter of UAS students have participated in a practicum, an internship, or undergraduate research. Satisfaction with these experiences was high, ranging from 73 to 87 percent.

- As part of their degree or certificate program, 14 percent of UAS students participated in a practicum; 12 percent participated in an internship; and 7 percent participated in undergraduate research.
- This question was not asked in 2009.

As part of your current degree/certificate program, have you participated in any of the following?

	All students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Practicum	14%	16%	13%
Internship	12	12	13
Undergraduate research	7	7	6
None of the above	69	68	69
Don't know	4	3	5

- Satisfaction was high for all three programs; only 3 to 4 percent were dissatisfied, and zero students were very dissatisfied. Internships earned the highest number of very satisfied ratings at 53 percent, followed by undergraduate research at 50 percent, then practicums at 42 percent. (The sample size for undergraduate research recipients was smaller at 40 students.)

How satisfied were you with your internship/practicum/undergraduate research experience?
Base: Participated

	Practicum n=85	Internship n=74	Undergraduate research n=40
Very satisfied	42%	53%	50%
Satisfied	45	32	23
Neutral	7	7	20
Dissatisfied	4	3	3
Very dissatisfied	-	-	-
Don't know	2	5	5

Assigned Advisor

Nearly 20 percent of UAS students either did not have an assigned advisor (8 percent) or they did not know whether they had an assigned advisor (10 percent).

- Over half of students said they had an academic advisor, and 26 percent said they had a faculty advisor. There were no statistically significant differences by sub-group.
- This question was not asked in 2009.

Do you have an assigned advisor?

	All students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Yes, an academic advisor	56%	56%	56%
Yes, a faculty advisor	26	26	26
No, I do not have an assigned advisor	8	9	8
Don't know	10	9	11

Suggestions for Retaining Students

Suggestions for retaining more students most commonly referred to offering more classes and/or degree programs, and improving class scheduling.

- Suggestions by survey participants for retaining UAS students were grouped into several categories: offering more classes and degree programs and improving the scheduling of courses; lowering the cost of tuition and offering more scholarships; better academic and advisor support; improving the motivation and involvement of professors; enhancing campus life and student involvement by offering more extracurricular and social activities; and marketing the university by doing more advertising, promotion, and community outreach.
- The suggestions for course/degree availability and scheduling had the most responses in any one category by the students. Major themes included:
 - Offer a larger variety of classes and degree/certificate programs both on campus and online
 - Better availability of required courses; classes offered more often; schedules more conducive to a 4 year graduation
 - Avoid class time conflicts
 - Re-instate the Early Childhood Education Program
 - Improved method of transferring credits between UA schools
- One suggestion to help students complete their degree in 4 years was to encourage freshmen to meet with their advisors and map out the courses needed on a spreadsheet.

- For those participants whose suggestions for retaining students centered on financial costs, several proposals included lowering tuition and offering more scholarships, tuition waivers and incentives.
- There were many comments and suggestions regarding academic advising. Many students noted that more academic advisors were needed along with better communication, interaction, and response time by the advisors. It was suggested that advisors actively participate in course planning to enable students to graduate.
- Suggestions were offered on the topic of improvements for faculty and staff. There were several comments on the need for friendlier staff and better customer service in administration. For faculty, there were suggestions that teachers needed to be more flexible, especially with students who work full-time and have family responsibilities. Also, students would like faculty who are professional and qualified in their fields. For those taking classes online, it was suggested that professors have more individual communication with their students.
- Students suggested developing a more robust community which includes more social and extracurricular activities and sports programs to increase student involvement. Several students also mentioned that better housing options were needed.
- To market the University to potential students, survey participants suggested: advertise the availability of online degree programs, especially in rural areas; perform outreach and recruiting in Alaska high schools; and promote the smaller class size of UAS courses and the uniqueness of the campus location.
- Other suggestions to retain students varied: develop an easier to use website; provide flexibility of scheduling; expand the relationship of campuses within the UA system by combining the multiple websites, bookstores, and credit transfer process; and increase the number of classes and degrees offered to entice more students to attend.

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

	All students n=345	Full-Time Students n=135	Part-Time Students n=210
Offer more classes and degree programs; improve scheduling	35%	35%	35%
Cost/financial aid/scholarship	10	10	10
Academic advising/tutoring	9	9	10
Better advertising/promotional activities	8	8	9
Faculty and staff	7	6	7
Campus life	6	6	6
Other	25	27	24

Applying to Other Colleges

One-quarter of UAS students applied to other schools in addition to UAS. Among those that applied elsewhere, the most common schools were UAA and UAF.

- One-quarter of UAS students said they applied to other colleges before selecting UAS, including 27 percent of full-time students and 23 percent of part-time students.
- School of Arts and Sciences students were more likely to have applied elsewhere at 34 percent, compared to 23 percent of Education students and 14 percent of Management students.
- Those likely to transfer/withdraw were more likely to have applied elsewhere at 34 percent, compared to 22 percent of those unlikely to transfer/withdraw.
- Those under 25 years old were more likely to have applied elsewhere at 30 percent, compared to 23 percent of those 25-39 and 16 percent of those 40 and older.
- Freshmen and sophomores/juniors were more likely to have applied elsewhere at 29 and 31 percent, versus 18 percent of seniors and 16 percent of graduate students.
- Traditional students were more likely to have applied elsewhere (29 percent, versus 22 percent of distance students).
- Ketchikan/Sitka students were more likely to have applied elsewhere (35 percent, versus 23 percent of Juneau students).
- Full-time students in 2012 were slightly less likely to have applied to other schools compared to 2009: 27 percent down from 31 percent in 2009.

*Did you apply to colleges or universities other than UAS
(for your current degree/certificate program)?*

	All Students n=594	Full-Time Students n=243	Part-Time Students n=351
Yes	25%	27%	23%
No	75	73	77

- One-third of students who applied to other schools applied to UAA, and 20 percent applied to UAF. Most other schools were located in Western states, particularly Washington and Oregon (see list below).
- Responses to this question were not coded in 2009, preventing direct comparison.

Which other colleges or universities?
(Base: applied to colleges or universities other than UAS)

	All students n=147	Full-Time Students n=65	Part-Time Students n=82
University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)	33%	31%	35%
University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)	20	17	23
University of Washington	7	8	7
Oregon State University	7	6	9
University of Oregon	7	3	11
Western Washington University	6	5	7
Oregon State University	6	5	7
Other	53	60	48
Don't know	5	5	6

Other Responses

Alaska Pacific University (4 responses)	Art Institute of Colorado
ASU	Bank State School of Education
Bard College	Barnard
Beloit College, Evergreen State	Berea College
Bloomsburg University	Boise State University
BSU	BYU-Idaho
Cal State San Bernardino (2 responses)	Clark Community College
Colorado (multiple universities)	Colorado School of Mines
Columbia	Concordia University-St. Paul
Cottey	CSUS-Stanislaus
CUNY Hunter	DeVry University
Drury University	Duke, Humboldt State
Eastern Illinois University	Eastern Washington University
Eastern Washington, Pacific University,	Evergreen State College
Evergreen University	Fort Lewis College
Fort Lewis College, Transferred to UAS	George Washington University
Gonzaga University	Harding University (Searcy, Arkansas)
Humboldt State University (2 responses)	Harvard
James Cook University and Unity College	Montana State University (Bozeman) (3 responses)
NDSU	Northern Arizona University (4 responses)
Northern New York colleges	Oklahoma City Community College
Online universities (2 responses)	Oregon
Pace	Royal Roads
SDSU	Seattle Pacific University
Simpson University	SOU
Southern Oregon Community College	Southern Oregon University (4 responses)
SUNY	UCSD (2 responses)
Ukraine	UCD
UCSF	UNE, Montana
UM	University of Bridgeport
University of Arkansas	University of Idaho
University of Idaho (3 responses)	University of Oregon
University of Montana (3 responses)	University of Phoenix
University of Northern British Columbia	University of Wyoming
University of Southern Oregon (2 responses)	Wenatchee Valley College
Washington State University (3 responses)	Western Governors University

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 all categories.

Survey Population Profile

	# of Respondents	% of Total
Full-Time vs. Part-Time		
Full-time	243	41%
Part-time	351	59
Age		
Under 18	6	1%
18 – 24	240	40
25 – 29	115	19
30 – 39	135	23
40 – 49	62	10
50 and over	36	6
Average age	30.2	
Class		
Freshman	167	28
Sophomore	115	19
Junior	78	13
Senior	122	21
Graduate student	111	19
Professional	1	<1
School		
School of Arts & Sciences	221	37%
School of Management	155	26
School of Education	126	21
School of Career Education	92	15
Origin at Time of Entry		
In-state	522	88%
Out-of-state	68	11
Foreign	4	1
Gender		
Female	406	68%
Male	188	32

Survey of Transferred/Withdrawn Students

The survey of transferred/withdrawn students was conducted with 205 former students either over the telephone or online. Nearly three-quarters of those contacted had withdrawn from UAS, while 27 percent had transferred to another school. All had attended UAS within the last five years. A similar survey was conducted of transferred and withdrawn students in 2009. Relevant comparisons are provided for the withdrawn samples; the small size of the transferred students sample prevents effective comparison.

Did you transfer to another school or withdraw from UAS?

	All Former Students n=205
Withdrew	73%
Transferred	27

Withdrawn Students

The most common reasons for withdrawing from UAS were financial reasons, personal/family reasons, and schedule/too busy.

- Most of the reasons cited by withdrawn students for leaving UAS had to do with personal circumstances, rather than with reasons related to UAS. Only 9 percent said they were not satisfied with the quality of classes or instructors.
- Withdrawn students surveyed in 2009 gave similar reasons for withdrawing from UAS, although the number one response in 2009 was personal/family reasons (35 percent) followed by financial reasons (32 percent). Those who moved from Juneau/Southeast dropped from 18 to 7 percent between the two survey years.

What are the main reasons you withdrew from UAS?

Base: Withdrew from UAS

	Withdrew from UAS n=149
Financial reasons	37%
Personal/family reasons	30
Schedule/too busy to attend classes	26
Burned out/lost interest	11
Not pursuing degree/only taking 1-2 courses	11
Need a break	11
Not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors	9
Not performing well academically	9
Moved from Juneau/Southeast	7
Other	27

Nine out of ten students who withdrew from UAS were satisfied with their overall education. The lowest-rated categories were availability of courses and career counseling services.

- Eighty-nine percent of withdrawn students were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of education at UAS.
- The highest-rated categories were quality of instructors/professors (85 percent satisfied), responsiveness of UAS staff (78 percent), and quality of instructional materials (78 percent).
- The lowest-rated categories were availability of courses (31 percent dissatisfied), quality of career counseling (23 percent dissatisfied), and variety of courses (21 percent dissatisfied).
- Withdrawn students gave similar satisfaction ratings in 2009 and 2012, although the percentage satisfied with their overall education increased from 80 to 89 percent.

**How satisfied were you with the following aspects of UAS?
Base: Withdrew from UAS**

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Overall quality of education	25%	64%	2%	6%	4%
Quality of instructors/professors	31	54	10	3	1
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	28	50	9	7	6
Quality of instructional materials	23	55	11	9	2
Quality of campus facilities	20	57	14	6	3
Schedule of courses (time of day/day of week)	12	54	13	14	6
Quality of degree/certificate programs	21	43	22	11	3
Academic advising from faculty	26	36	23	10	5
Advising from academic advisors	25	37	18	11	9
Variety of degree/certificate programs	12	44	26	15	3
Variety of courses offered	12	43	24	18	3
Preparation for employment	9	42	34	10	5
Quality of career counseling services	20	27	30	13	10
Quality of social life	7	38	43	8	3
Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)	10	34	26	26	5
Extracurricular opportunities	7	32	49	4	8
Housing availability	9	25	47	9	9

Note: Categories appear in order of satisfaction level (very satisfied + satisfied), with the exception of overall quality of education.

Nearly half of withdrawn students said they were likely to return to UAS to complete a degree or certificate.

- Forty-four percent of withdrawn students were likely to return to UAS to complete a degree, while 34 percent were unlikely, and 21 percent didn't know.
- The percentage of withdrawn students likely to return to UAS dropped slightly between 2009 and 2012, from 52 to 44 percent.
- Among those unlikely to return to UAS, 40 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 14 percent.

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

Base: Withdrew from UAS

	Withdrew from UAS n=149
Very likely	21%
Likely	23
Unlikely	21
Very unlikely	13
Don't know	21

How likely are you to return to a different school to complete a degree/certificate?

Base: Unlikely to return to UAS

	Withdrew from UAS n=51
Very likely	18%
Likely	22
Unlikely	33
Very unlikely	12
Don't know	16

One-quarter of withdrawn students believe UAS is better than similar sized colleges in the Lower 48 in terms of education quality, and 42 percent think it is about the same. Just 7 percent think it is worse.

- Compared to 2009, withdrawn students in 2012 were more likely to say that the quality is about the same (from 34 to 39 percent), and less likely to say it is worse (from 13 to 9 percent). They were about equally likely to say it is better (from 27 to 25 percent).
- These figures are very similar to the results among current students, of whom 28 percent said UAS is better; 33 percent said UAS is about the same; 7 percent said UAS is worse; and 32 percent said they didn't know.

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

	Withdrew from UAS n=149
Better	25%
About the same	39
Worse	9
Don't know	28

When asked for suggestions on retaining more students, the most common suggestions centered around offering more classes and degree programs and/or improving scheduling.

- Suggestions on student retention generally resembled those offered by current students. Nearly half of withdrawn students said they didn't know.

What steps can UAS take to encourage students to complete their degrees at UAS?
Base: Withdrew from UAS

	Withdrew from UAS n=149
Offer more classes and degree programs; improve scheduling	18%
Cost/financial aid/scholarships	11
Academic advising/tutoring	6
Campus life	6
Better advertising/promotional activities	3
Faculty and staff	2
Other	12
Don't know	47

Transferred Students

Nearly half of transferred students left UAS because their degree program was not offered, and 20 percent left because desired courses were not offered.

- Many reasons for transferring from UAS had to do with personal circumstances: wanted to leave the area (25 percent), financial reasons (16 percent), personal/family reasons (14 percent), and wanted to be closer to home (7 percent).

What are the main reasons you transferred from UAS?
Base: Transferred from UAS

	Transferred from UAS n=56
Degree program not offered at UAS	46%
Want to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska	25
Desired courses not offered at UAS	20
Financial reasons	16
Personal/family reasons	14
Want school with more people	14
Better course scheduling elsewhere	13
Want school with more classes available	11
Social reasons/campus life	9
Wanted to be closer to home	7
Want school with better academic reputation	5
Faculty is better elsewhere	2
Other	14

Over half of transferred students were attracted to their new school by its degree program, and another 34 percent were attracted by the location.

- Other popular responses included friend/family live nearby (25 percent), more course offerings (20 percent), and recommended by friends/family (16 percent).
- Most transferred students were attending other UA campuses or public universities in the Western states. Colleges mentioned more than once include UAA, UAF, University of Hawaii, Washington State University, Southern Oregon University, University of Idaho, Portland State University, University of Colorado, and University of Montana.

What attracted you to that school in particular?
Base: Transferred from UAS

	Transferred from UAS n=56
Degree program	55%
Location	34
Friends/family live nearby	25
More course offerings	20
Recommended by friends/family	16
Bigger school/larger campus	14
Campus life	14
Reputation	14
Lower cost/scholarship	9
Recommended by teacher/counselor/coach	7
Other	16

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

- Zero transferred students were dissatisfied with their overall quality of education at UAS.
- The highest-rated aspects were quality of instructors/professors (90 percent satisfied) and responsiveness of UAS staff (85 percent satisfied).
- The lowest-rated aspects of UAS were variety of degree programs (25 percent dissatisfied) and variety of courses offered (21 percent dissatisfied).

**How satisfied were you with the following aspects of UAS?
Base: Transferred from UAS**

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Overall quality of education	43%	50%	8%	-%	-%
Quality of instructors/professors	33	57	9	-	-
Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs	48	37	10	4	2
Quality of instructional materials	22	62	16	-	-
Schedule of courses	25	54	15	6	-
Advising from academic advisors	36	36	20	7	2
Academic advising from faculty	24	47	22	7	-
Quality of campus facilities	27	42	27	2	2
Availability of courses	15	51	21	11	2
Quality of degree/certificate programs	16	48	20	16	-
Preparation for employment	13	45	39	3	-
Quality of career counseling services	23	33	36	8	-
Variety of courses offered	13	43	24	19	2
Variety of degree/certificate programs	6	47	21	23	2
Quality of social life	15	27	39	15	5
Housing availability	17	20	53	7	3
Extracurricular opportunities	14	19	44	14	8

Notes: 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, one-quarter of transferred students say it is better, and 52 percent say it is about the same. Just 4 percent say it is worse.

- About the same number of transferred (23 percent), withdrawn (25 percent), and current students (28 percent) say that the quality of education is better at UAS compared with other colleges. Fewer transferred students say it is worse (4 percent) compared with withdrawn (9 percent) and current students (7 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=56
Better	23%
About the same	52
Worse	4
Don't know	21

About half of transferred students were in a field related to the program they pursued at UAS. Most or all of their credits transferred to their new school.

- Forty-five percent of transferred students said their new program was in a field related to their UAS program.
- Among these 25 respondents, 20 (or 80 percent) said most or all of their credits transferred. Four respondents (or 16 percent) said most/all of their credits counted only as electives. Just one respondent (or 4 percent) said few or none of their credits transferred.

Is your degree/certificate program at your new school in a field related to the program you pursued at UAS?

	Transferred from UAS n=56
Yes	45%
No	41
Don't know	14

Transferred students (like withdrawn and current students) suggested that UAS offer more classes and degree programs and improve scheduling in order to retain more students.

- Half of transferred students did not offer suggestions for improving student retention.

What steps can UAS take to encourage students to complete their degrees at UAS?
Base: Withdrew from UAS

	Withdrew from UAS n=149
Offer more classes and degree programs; improve scheduling	23%
Academic advising/tutoring	4
Campus life	4
Cost/financial aid/scholarships	2
Better advertising/promotional activities	2
Faculty and staff	2
Other	19
Don't know	47

Discussion Groups

Two discussion groups were held with current UAS students in April 2012, one on the Juneau campus and the second via teleconference. Students were recruited via telephone and email, and were given a \$25 honorarium for participating. UAS employees were excluded from participation. Following are summaries of the discussions.

On-Campus Discussion

The on-campus discussion group participants were recruited from a list of degree-seeking undergraduates who were taking most of their classes through the Juneau campus, and were enrolled in between three and 14 credits. Fourteen students participated in the discussion, which was held in an Egan classroom. All were seeking degrees. Eight were from Juneau, three from Anchorage/Eagle River, and the remainder from out of state. Four participants were Education majors, the remainder were majoring in a variety of areas.

Three of the participants hoped to graduate within four years. The remainder said it will take at least five.

What attracted you to your UAS degree program (if you have one)?

- Ability to work with faculty to customize programs.
- UAS is a good place to study environmental science. Good employment options.
- Resident tuition is lower than for Western Undergraduate Exchange, and living at home makes it even cheaper.
- Close-knit campus, intimate setting.
- Flexibility to study in different areas.

Major theme: The economics are attractive, and students like the small-college feel.

How well do you feel you understand your graduation requirements?

- Some students have had success working with professors to plan schedules (using the six-year projected course sequence). Even if you plan two or three years ahead, however, classes may still be cancelled, over-enrolled or scheduled in conflicting time slots.

Major theme: Requirements are clear, but the class sequence hasn't worked for several participants because of availability or scheduling conflicts, for example in environmental science. UAOnline works well.

What do you do to keep track of degree requirements and your progress?

Major theme: UAOnline and DegreeWorks are helpful. Advisors get mostly good but occasionally bad reviews.

Are you able to get the courses you need, when you need them?

Major themes:

a) Both of these have been a problem at one time or another for most students. In addition to availability and schedule conflicts, combining day classes with classes scheduled only at night can be a challenge, e.g., an 8:00 am class and a 7:30 pm class on the same day.

b) Online classes are a mixed bag. They solve some scheduling problems, especially pre-requisites, but...

- Quality is variable
- Online format doesn't work for all types of classes
- Internet quality and access to computers is variable
- Students paying to live on or near campus resent having to take online courses.

c) Online classes where students can work at their own pace are good. Web meetings are less satisfactory. Some students have a hard time finding a quiet space from which to dial in and feel there should be a designated place on campus, especially since cellphone reception on campus is often bad. [Individual comment: Homeless people (nonstudents) use the study rooms in the library as crash pads. This interferes with paying students who need those spaces for studying and call-in classes.]

d) Students resent paying additional fees to take online courses through other campuses, especially when they are taught by professors who typically teach at UAS. [The latter may have been only a single instance].

e) Blackboard and Illuminate Live are very good programs, but there is not enough technical guidance.

Have the required classes in your degree program, if you have one, been useful?

Students are largely happy with the quality of upper-level classes.

Does everyone have an advisor? Faculty or Student Resource Center?

- Only one student in the group did not know who his advisor is.
- Many advisors and staff are slow or inconsistent responding to emails.
- Most advisors are accessible and helpful. Some are not, however. One was described as "insulting." Changing advisors can be difficult and stressful.

How accessible would you say UAS faculty are?

- The best faculty (including advisors) often use email to answer questions and communicate their availability.

How accessible would you say UAS staff are?

- Some personnel in reception and the financial aid office have been unfriendly and unhelpful.
- Financial aid advice is not always consistent from one staff person to another. (*This complaint has been voiced in prior UAS student research.*)

- IT staff are helpful but busy. One student recommended that students should go online a week before class starts and experiment with all the software. Get tech help then, if you need it.

**Why aren't you enrolled in more credits?
(It costs an extra \$10,000 to graduate in five years instead of four.)**

Major theme: Most participants found this question aggravating. All feel they are progressing as quickly as their personal obligations, finances, and availability of classes will allow. Money (i.e, the need to work while going to school) seems to be the main reason. Most participants said they have been slowed because classes they need are either not offered, full, or scheduled in conflict with other classes they need.

Specific objections to "Finish in Four":

- Some professors appear to schedule classes for their own convenience, rather than to maximize availability for students majoring in those areas.
- When classes close because they are fully enrolled, it often happens that some students drop out during the first week or two. Enrollment is not re-opened in these instances, however, even though most students feel they could easily catch up with the two or three class periods they would miss. Some professors allow over-enrollment in expectation that there will be attrition, but not all do this.
- A common complaint is that UAS is reluctant to accept transfer credits, even from other UA campuses. This slows graduation and forces incoming students to sit through introductory material they have already studied. *[One student was "forced" (presumably, told by her advisor) to retake courses only to have transfer credits approved later (after petitioning), so that the extra courses are viewed as a waste of time and resources.]*
- Students say they work hard to balance educational and financial commitments. They resent the message from some advisors that they should reduce their employment to spend more time on studies. One student said the TRIO program had been a huge help in balancing work and classes.
- Most participants said 20 to 25 hours is the maximum workweek when carrying 16 credits, and 12 credits is the maximum load when working full time.
- Transportation availability has a big impact on the amount of school students can fit into their lives.

For these reasons, students resent the "Finish in Four" signs around campus. They would love to finish in four, but say that a combination of financial constraints and not being able to schedule needed classes makes it unfeasible.

Are you using DegreeWorks to plan/track your progress? Why or why not?

Major theme: DegreeWorks is a good program, and many students use it. However, it does not warn students about impending problems. It would be helpful if the software could flag situations where students may be in danger of, for example, losing financing because of scheduling gaps.

What advice would you give UAS to keep their students enrolled?

- Some students leave because they find they can finish their degree faster somewhere else.

- Students whose skills are in demand, such as environmental science majors, leave school because they can get hired without the degree. [Presumably, they complete the degree at a later time.]
- UAS has done well to expand the number of Alaska Native-related course offerings. However, Alaska Native-oriented courses are not well sequenced, and the overall approach to education at UAS does not incorporate diversity very well. Incorporating more learning about other cultures, including the indigenous ones, would enrich the university, as well as helping to retain Alaska Native students. We are missing opportunities. [For example, music appreciation courses are seen as 95 percent European classical music.]

Major themes: Many students walk a fine line between financial and course commitments. To graduate in four years, they will need informed, accessible advisors who can take into account both financial and academic considerations to develop a plan that also includes some flexibility on the part of UAS. A car breakdown can have a severe impact on a student's ability to meet both work and school demands. The balance can also be upset by factors such as:

- changes in course availability
- tuition increases
- variable demands and salary associated with work
- unanticipated rent or other personal expenses.

Teleconference Discussion

The teleconference discussion group participants were recruited from a list of degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled in between three and 14 credits, who take most of their credits via eLearning, and who live in an Alaska community without a UA campus. Because this universe of students is small, only six students were recruited for this discussion. Four lived in small Southeast Alaska communities, one lived in Interior Alaska, and one lived in the Lower 48. (In the interest of confidentiality their communities of residence are withheld.)

Technology

- Most of the students noted no problems with the technological aspects of distance delivery.
- One student had technical problems with the Elluminate program. When they called UAS, they were referred to Fairbanks, where the support staff was able to correct the problem. The UAS tech staff were not very familiar with the Blackboard program.
- Another student had problems with Blackboard and a UAS support staff member emailed her a tutorial on how to better utilize Blackboard. But the tutorial didn't work, so they gave up.
- Most students agreed that Blackboard was fairly straightforward and easy to use.

Registration

- The registration process went smoothly for some, and not for others. Two participants noted that the first time registering was difficult but it was much easier for subsequent semesters.

- One student had recently learned there was financial aid available for books (Title IV), and wished that UAS had informed her of this opportunity beforehand. Another student agreed, suggesting that UAS needs to do a better job of informing students about these funds.

Distance Classes

- Participants were generally satisfied with their eLearning classes.
- One student expressed a desire to have more communication with their teacher in print-based classes. She would have liked to receive a message checking in with her from time to time.

Reasons for not Taking More Credits

- The most popular reasons given for not taking more credits were time constraints due to family and work. Other reasons included:
 - *The grant that I have only pays for seven credits*
 - *I'm not in a big hurry to finish my degree.*
 - *Financial reasons*
 - *Pell Grant doesn't give enough money*
 - *I can only focus on two classes at a time*
 - *The courses I needed were not offered*

DegreeWorks

- When asked about the program DegreeWorks, most of the participants had not heard of it. Of the two that had heard of it, they had just learned of it recently, and had not spent much time with it.

General Comments and Suggestions

In general, the distance students were very happy with their UAS experience. For the most part they found the technology involved with distance delivery fairly easy to use, and they usually got the support they needed. They were very appreciative of the opportunity to take classes while living in remote locations, as well as meeting family and work obligations.

- *Make English class available anytime like the Math class.*
- *Incorporate Praxis exam into degree program. I wish my advisor had told me about exam.*
- *I'm really happy with the program. They could offer more distance programs. The key point is anytime, anywhere; you can keep your life.*
- *I loved UAS distance program. I was not impressed with UAA.*

- *Pretty good for most part. The whole UAA/UAS/UAF transferring of credits is very confusing. The titles are similar, but something doesn't add up and they're not the same. I don't get that. You have to petition for everything. They should all have the same title. They are part of the same system.*
- *Regarding classes down south, they don't understand that you're not able to access a fax machine. We live in rural villages. We don't have access to things like in the big city. UAS pioneered distance courses. They do it so well.*
- *I'm very upset about the discontinuation of the early childhood degree. I've been going to UAS since 2003. I'm attached to UAS and very sad I have to move to Anchorage. The PITAS program is my main source of funding, it's only offered to students going to UAS. Now I can't get funding from them anymore. I signed up for classes that would have applied to that program. By the time I found out, it was too late to drop. Only one of the classes count towards Anchorage program.*

Comparison to 2009 Survey

The following tables show 2012 survey results compared to 2009 survey results, among current, full-time students only. (The definition of part-time students was deliberately changed in 2012, preventing direct comparison of results.)

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

	2009 Full-Time Students n=296	2012 Full-Time Students n=243
Very satisfied	30%	35%
Satisfied	50	47
Neutral	16	12
Dissatisfied	4	5
Very dissatisfied	<1	1

Satisfaction with Specific Areas Percent "Satisfied" and "Very Satisfied"

	2009 Full-Time Students n=296	2012 Full-Time Students n=243
Quality of instructors/professors	34 - 46	31 - 50
Overall responsiveness of staff to student needs	28 - 44	31 - 45
Quality of instructional materials	15 - 58	18 - 55
Academic advising from Student Resources Center (2009) Advising from academic advisors (2012)	23 - 36	31 - 42
Quality of campus facilities	20 - 55	25 - 47
Quality of degree/certificate programs	20 - 50	25 - 47
Academic advising from faculty	30 - 41	28 - 41
Schedule of courses (time of day/day of week)*	n/a	22 - 46
Preparation for employment	17 - 37	15 - 43
Variety of degree programs	11 - 35	16 - 37
Quality of social life	16 - 44	16 - 32
Variety of courses offered	12 - 39	12 - 43
Quality of career counseling services	19 - 30	17 - 28
Housing availability	23 - 28	15 - 28
Extracurricular opportunities	9 - 32	12 - 26
Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)*	n/a	10 - 40
Schedule/availability of courses offered*	9 - 38	n/a

Note: This table should be read as "Of full-time students in 2009, 34 percent were very satisfied with the quality of instructors/professors and 46 percent were satisfied." *Schedule/availability of courses offered was divided into two response categories in 2012.

**Importance of Specific Areas
Percent Rating “Very Important”**

	2009 Full-Time Students n=296	2012 Full-Time Students n=243
Quality of instructors/professors	91%	91%
Quality of degree/certificate programs	79	81
Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)*	n/a	76
Overall responsiveness of staff to student needs	69	75
Quality of instructional materials	61	71
Schedule of courses (time of day/day of week)*	n/a	68
Variety of courses offered	73	68
Preparation for employment	59	64
Academic advising from Student Resources Center (2009)	37	61
Advising from academic advisors (2012)		
Quality of campus facilities	48	48
Variety of degree programs	55	59
Academic advising from faculty	61	58
Quality of career counseling services	34	41
Housing availability	40	38
Quality of social life	29	25
Extracurricular opportunities	25	24
Schedule/availability of courses offered*	76	n/a

*Schedule/availability of courses offered was divided into two response categories in 2012.

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

	2009 Full-Time Students N=296	2012 Full-Time Students n=243
Better	25%	29%
About the same	41	33
Worse	4	7
Don't know	30	31

Why did you choose to attend UAS?

	2009 Full-Time Students N=296	2012 Full-Time Students n=243
Offered online/distance courses*	6%	45%
Low tuition cost	51	37
Could live at home	34	36
Alaska location, beautiful campus	49	35
Small campus	41	28
Specific program/class*	6	28
Inexpensive method for completing undergraduate general requirements	27	24
Access to financing or scholarship	18	23
It's the only option in Juneau/Ketchikan/Sitka	20	22
Recommendation by friends or family	21	19
Reputation of degree/certificate programs	19	15
Open enrollment	16	14
Recommendation by high school teacher/counselor/coach	5	6
Recruited by UAS representative	n/a	5
Publications and brochures received from UAS	n/a	5
Requirement for work/job training	7	5
Quick response time to inquiries	n/a	n/a
Other	3	7

* These responses were not offered as options in 2009; they were recorded as "other" responses and coded after. They were offered as options in 2012, which explains the large increase in responses.

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

	2009 Full-Time Students n=296	2012 Full-Time Students n=243
Very likely	13%	17%
Likely	11	7
Unlikely	20	20
Very unlikely	49	48
Don't know	7	8

How likely are you to withdraw—even temporarily—from UAS (without transferring to another school) before completing your degree/certificate?

	2009 Full-Time Students n=296	2012 Full-Time Students n=243
Very likely	<1%	2%
Likely	2	5
Unlikely	10	24
Very unlikely	83	61
Don't know	5	8

Note: The words “even temporarily” were added to the survey in 2012.

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

	2009 Full-Time Students n=296	2012 Full-Time Students n=243
Very prepared	33%	33%
Prepared	47	55
Unprepared	16	7
Very unprepared	2	4
Don't know	2	1

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 2012

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)

01 Low tuition cost

02 Could live at home

03 Requirement for work/job training

04 It's the only option in Juneau/Ketchikan/Sitka

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/certificate 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 Specific program or class

16 Offered online/distance courses

17 Other _____

Skip Q1a if only one selection made

1a. Which of these was the most important reason you chose to attend UAS? [Only show Q1 chosen items on response list]

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 Reading/comprehension

07 Life skills (time management, money management, organization)

08 Other _____

3. Which of the following best describes your current career/educational plans?

- 01 I know what job/career I want to pursue after obtaining my degree/certificate
- 02 I am considering several potential jobs/careers
- 03 I am already in my chosen job/career
- 04 I plan to pursue additional study after obtaining my degree/certificate
- 05 I do not have any specific jobs/careers or additional study in mind
- 06 Don't know

4. Do you have an assigned advisor?

- 01 Yes, an academic advisor
- 02 Yes, a faculty advisor
- 03 No, I do not have an assigned advisor
- 04 Don't know

Next, we would like to ask you about your satisfaction with UAS.

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

- 01 Very satisfied
- 02 Satisfied
- 03 Neutral
- 04 Dissatisfied
- 05 Very dissatisfied
- 06 Don't know

6. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your UAS experience?

- 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 of courses (time of day/day of week)
 - d. Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)
 - e. Quality of degree/certificate programs
 - f. Variety of degree/certificate programs
 - g. Quality of career counseling services
 - h. Quality of instructional materials
 - i. Quality of campus facilities
 - j. Quality of social life
 - k. Housing availability
 - l. Extracurricular opportunities
 - m. Advising from academic advisors
 - n. Academic advising from faculty
 - o. Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs
 - p. Preparation for employment

7. How important are each of the following aspects to your UAS experience?

- 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 of courses (time of day/day of week)
- d. Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)
- e. Quality of degree/certificate programs
- f. Variety of degree/certificate programs
- g. Quality of career counseling services
- h. Quality of instructional materials
- i. Quality of campus facilities
- j. Quality of social life
- k. Housing availability
- l. Extracurricular opportunities
- m. Advising from academic advisors
- n. Academic advising from faculty
- o. Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs
- p. Preparation for employment

8. What do you like the most about UAS? (Select one)

- 01 Instructors/professors
- 02 University staff
- 03 Small campus
- 04 Beautiful location
- 05 Small classes
- 06 Sense of community
- 07 Ability to take courses online
- 08 Affordability
- 09 Other _____
- 10 Don't know

9. What do you like the least about UAS?

- 01 Nothing
- 02 _____
- 03 Don't know

10. Are you currently enrolled in at least 15 credits?

- 01 Yes (skip to Q12)
- 02 No

11. What are the main reasons you are not enrolled in 15 credits this semester? (Check all that apply)

- 01 Desired courses not offered this semester
- 02 Desired courses offered at times that do not fit my schedule
- 03 Time constraints due to family
- 04 Time constraints due to work
- 05 I am not in a hurry to obtain my degree/certificate
- 06 Unable to keep up with classes/studying at 15 credits

- 07 I need fewer than 15 credits to obtain my degree/certificate
- 08 Financial reasons
- 09 Other _____
- 10 Don't know

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

- 01 Yes
- 02 No (skip to Q13)

12a. Which other colleges or universities? (Check all that apply)

- 01 University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)
- 02 University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)
- 03 University of Washington
- 04 Western Washington University
- 05 University of Hawaii
- 06 University of Oregon
- 07 Oregon State University
- 08 Other _____
- 09 Don't know

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

- 01 Very likely
- 02 Likely
- 03 Unlikely (skip to Q14)
- 04 Very unlikely (skip to Q14)
- 05 Don't know (skip to Q14)

13a. Why do you plan to transfer from UAS? (Check all that apply)

- 01 Degree/certificate 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 academic 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 Financial reasons
- 11 Want to be closer to home
- 12 Social reasons/campus life
- 13 Other _____
- 14 Don't know

13b. Where do you plan to transfer? NEW QUESTION

- 01 University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)
- 02 University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)

- 03 University of Washington
- 04 Western Washington University
- 05 University of Hawaii
- 06 University of Oregon
- 07 Oregon State University
- 08 Other _____
- 09 Don't know

Skip to Q15

14. How likely are you to withdraw – even temporarily – from UAS (without transferring to another school) before completing your degree/certificate?

- 01 Very likely
- 02 Likely
- 03 Unlikely (skip to Q15)
- 04 Very unlikely (skip to Q15)
- 05 Don't know (skip to Q15)

14a. Why do you think you might withdraw from UAS? (Check all that apply)

- 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 Need a break
- 08 Not performing well academically
- 09 Other _____
- 10 Don't know

15. As part of your current degree/certificate program, have you participated in any of the following? (Check all that apply)

- 01 Undergraduate research (a research project outside the scope of a regular catalog course) → ask Q16a
- 02 Practicum → ask Q16b
- 03 Internship → ask Q16c
- 04 None of the above (skip to Q17)
- 05 Don't know (skip to Q17)

16a. How satisfied were you with your undergraduate research experience?

- 01 Very satisfied
- 02 Satisfied
- 03 Neutral
- 04 Dissatisfied
- 05 Very dissatisfied
- 06 Don't know

16b. How satisfied were you with your practicum experience?

- 01 Very satisfied
- 02 Satisfied
- 03 Neutral
- 04 Dissatisfied
- 05 Very dissatisfied
- 06 Don't know

16c. How satisfied were you with your internship experience?

- 01 Very satisfied
- 02 Satisfied
- 03 Neutral
- 04 Dissatisfied
- 05 Very dissatisfied
- 06 Don't know

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

- 01 Don't know
-

18. 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

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

a. Name: _____

b. Email Address: _____

UAS Student Retention and Market Research Study
Survey of Transferred/Withdrawn Students 2012 - ONLINE

Screener1 Did you attend University of Alaska Southeast at any point in the last five years?
(If no, discontinue survey)

Screener2 Are you currently attending UAS? (If yes, discontinue survey)

1. Did you transfer to another school or withdraw from UAS in the last five years?

- 01 Transferred to another school (skip to Q6)
- 02 Withdrew from UAS without transferring (stopped taking classes)
- 03 Graduated/attained degree (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 Moving from Juneau/Southeast
- 05 Not satisfied with quality of classes/instructors
- 06 Personal/family reasons
- 07 Need a break
- 08 Not performing well academically
- 09 Other _____
- 10 Don't know

3. How satisfied were you with the following aspects of UAS?

- a. Overall quality of education
- b. Quality of instructors/professors
- c. Variety of courses offered
- d. Schedule of courses (time of day/day of week)
- e. Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)
- f. Quality of degree/certificate programs
- g. Variety of degree/certificate programs
- h. Quality of career counseling services
- i. Quality of instructional materials
- j. Quality of campus facilities
- k. Quality of social life
- l. Housing availability
- m. Extracurricular opportunities
- n. Advising from academic advisors
- o. Academic advising from faculty
- p. Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs
- q. Preparation for employment

4. How likely are you to return to UAS to complete a degree/certificate?

- 01 Very likely (skip to Q12)
- 02 Likely (skip to Q12)
- 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/certificate?

01 Very likely

02 Likely

03 Unlikely

04 Very unlikely

05 Don't know

Skip to Q12

Questions for those who TRANSFERRED

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

01 Degree/certificate program not offered at UAS

02 Desired courses not offered at UAS

03 Better course scheduling elsewhere

04 Faculty is better elsewhere

05 Wanted school with better academic reputation

06 Wanted school with more people

07 Wanted school with more classes available

08 Wanted to leave Juneau/Southeast/Alaska

09 Personal/family reasons

10 Financial reasons

11 Wanted to be closer to home

12 Social reasons/campus life

13 Other _____

14 Don't know

7. How satisfied were you with the following aspects of UAS?

- a. Overall quality of education
- b. Quality of instructors/professors
- c. Variety of courses offered
- d. Schedule of courses (time of day/day of week)
- e. Availability of courses (each semester, annually, etc.)
- f. Quality of degree/certificate programs
- g. Variety of degree/certificate programs
- h. Quality of career counseling services
- i. Quality of instructional materials
- j. Quality of campus facilities
- k. Quality of social life
- l. Housing availability
- m. Extracurricular opportunities
- n. Advising from academic advisors
- o. Academic advising from faculty
- p. Overall responsiveness of UAS staff to student needs
- q. Preparation for employment

8. What school did you transfer to?

01 University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA)

- 02 University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF)
- 03 University of Washington
- 04 Western Washington University
- 05 University of Hawaii
- 06 University of Oregon
- 07 Oregon State University
- 08 Other _____
- 09 Don't know

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

- 01 Degree/certificate 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 _____

10. Is your degree/certificate program at your new school in a field related to the program you pursued at UAS?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No (skip to Q12)
- 03 Don't know (skip to Q12)

11. How well did your UAS credits transfer to your new school?

- 01 Most/all of my UAS credits count towards my new degree/certificate program
- 02 Most/all of my UAS credits count only as electives
- 03 Few or none of my UAS credits transferred
- 04 Don't know

ALL RESPONDENTS

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

- 01 Don't know
-

13. 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

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