

Accreditation Kickoff!



UNIVERSITY of
ALASKA ANCHORAGE™

Meaningful & Sustainable Assessment: What does UAA student learning and success evidence suggest and how can you use it in deep and meaningful ways?



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**Indiana University Bloomington
September 13, 2024**



Institutional Accreditation

ACADEMICS / OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS / INSTITUTIONAL AND SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION

Year 7

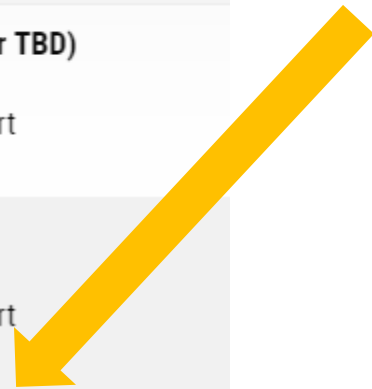
DATE	ACTIVITY
Fall 2024	Annual Accreditation/Assessment Seminar (September TBD) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Draft - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Report
Spring 2025	Annual Academic Assessment Retreat (May TBD) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Draft - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Report
Summer 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Submit - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Report

Year 1 (Fall 2025)

DATE	ACTIVITY
Fall 2025	Annual Accreditation/Assessment Seminar (September TBD) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Host - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Site Visit

Year 7
The Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) is a comprehensive, summative evaluation of the institution...on all Standards...Student Success and Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

The campus visit!



Moving Forward...

“We are looking forward to our year of reflection, as we prepare for our Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) Self Evaluation Report and Fall 2025 site visit”
UAA PRFR report, p. 87



Preparing for the Year 7 Comprehensive Review



Focus: Student Success, Institutional Mission & Effectiveness

Evidence of:

- Systematic evaluation to improve student learning & achievement
- Effective system of student learning assessment in programs, institution, core competencies
- Assessment to improve student learning
- Use of disaggregated data to address achievement gaps

Before we get into Reflections...

One of the challenges with assessment is answering the “so-what” question.



Assessment's "So What?" Qualities...

Meaningful, Manageable, and Useful



Meaningful assessment is “authentic” -- it is not created by external experts and imposed on our institution, programs, courses, faculty & students. Instead, it is seamlessly built into the ongoing teaching and learning operations...an integral part of the enterprise that demands an entire village to make it meaningful and used for improvement.

Learning Improvement Approach to Assessment



The assessment loop is not closed until we look at the data collected, analyze it, recommend changes based on our analyses, make the changes, assess again, and ultimately, realize improvements in student learning.

5 Principles of a Meaningful Assessment System (NILOA statement)

✓ Develop specific, actionable learning outcome statements

 Connect learning outcomes with actual student demonstrations of learning

 Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, beginning with the faculty

 Design assessment approaches that generate actionable evidence about student learning that can be understood and used to improve student and institutional performance

 Focus on improvement and compliance will take care of itself



Are these true for UAA? What examples come to mind?



5 Principles of a Meaningful Assessment System

(NILOA statement) ... how is UAA doing?

1



Develop specific, actionable learning outcome statements

2



Connect learning outcomes with actual student demonstrations of learning

3



Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, beginning with the faculty

4



Design assessment approaches that generate actionable evidence about student learning that can be understood and used to improve student and institutional performance

5



Focus on improvement and compliance will take care of itself



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**Which principle could bring
MORE meaning to assessment at
UAA?**

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.



Which principle could bring MORE meaning to assessment at UAA?

Multiple Choice Poll 73 votes 73 participants

1 actionable SLOs - 11 votes



2 demonstrations of learning - 17 votes



3 collaborate with faculty - 3 votes



4 better assessment approaches - 5 votes



5 focus on improvement - 37 votes



*Great to see given
your maturing
assessment system*

UAA Core Competencies



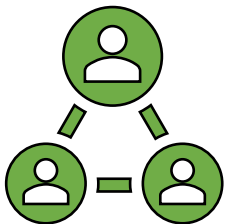
Effective Communication: *The knowledge and skills necessary to engage in effective communication in diverse contexts and formats.*



Creative and Critical Thinking: *The knowledge and skills necessary for the critical exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events in order to creatively design, evaluate, and implement a strategy to answer complex questions or achieve a desired goal.*



Intercultural Fluency: *The knowledge and skills necessary to promote effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts, particularly in terms of the diverse populations of Alaska.*



Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility: *The knowledge and skills necessary to promote personal flourishing, professional excellence, and community engagement.*

Learning Outcomes Assessment Evidence - Basically 2 Types:

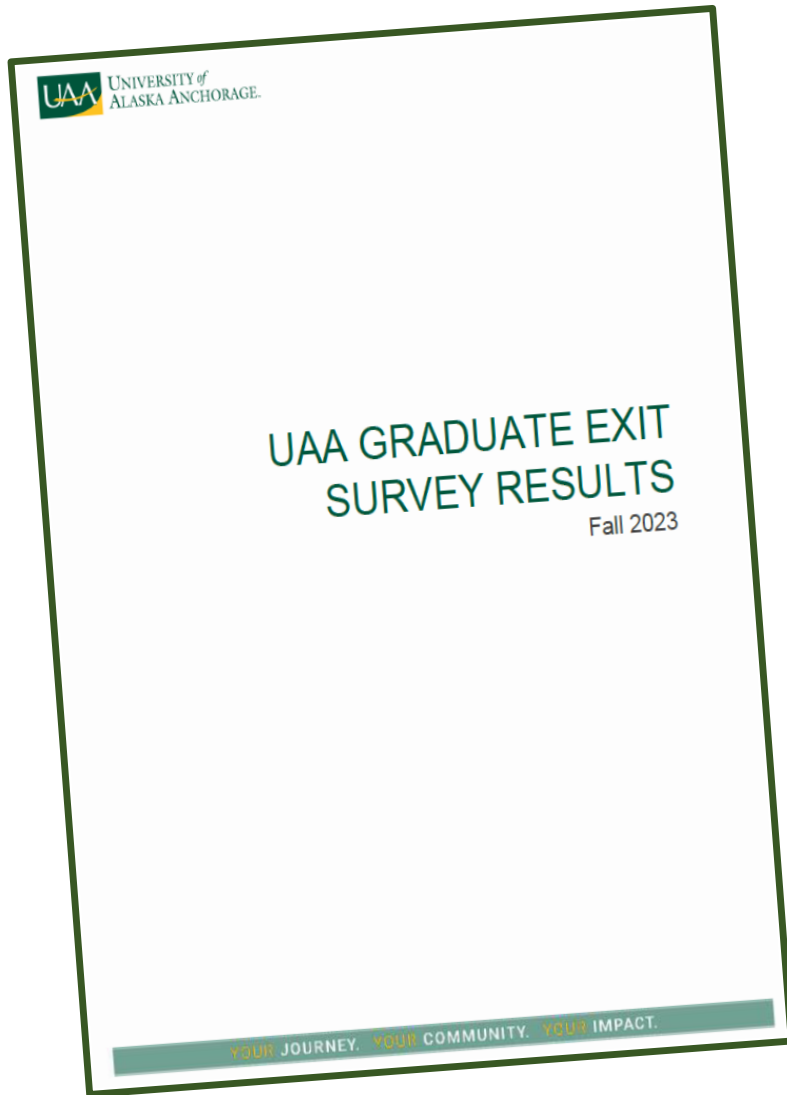
Indirect - methods that ask students or some one else their impression, perception rather than demonstrate

Direct - methods of collecting information that displays knowledge and skills

(Banta & Palomba, 2015)



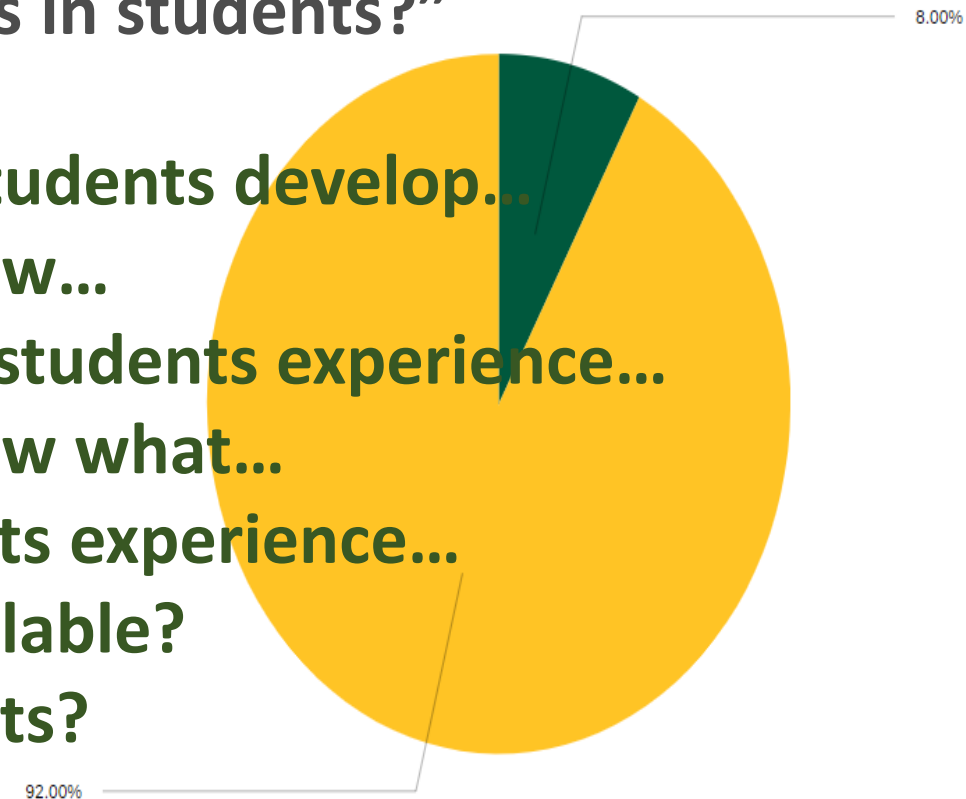
Evidence of the Core Competencies across UAA



Core Competency Landscape Survey

“Is your area actively working to help develop the UAA Core Competencies in students?”

What activities help students develop...
How will students know...
Where and when will students experience...
How will students know what...
How often will students experience...
Are these already available?
Available to all students?



Findings: Graduate Exit Survey (Indirect)

- Students feel **well prepared to apply** each of the core learning competencies in their life as a UAA graduate
- Students felt **welcomed and included** at UAA
- Students **affirmed UAA's commitment** to their success
- Students felt UAA helped prepare them for **post-grad success**



Findings: Graduate Exit Survey (Indirect)



Core Competencies Ranked

“Feeling Prepared” (1= highest; comments about “what UAA did well” provide further support)

- 1. Personal, Professional, & Community Responsibility**
- 2. Effective Communication,**
- 3. Creative and Critical Thinking,**
- 4. Intercultural Fluency**



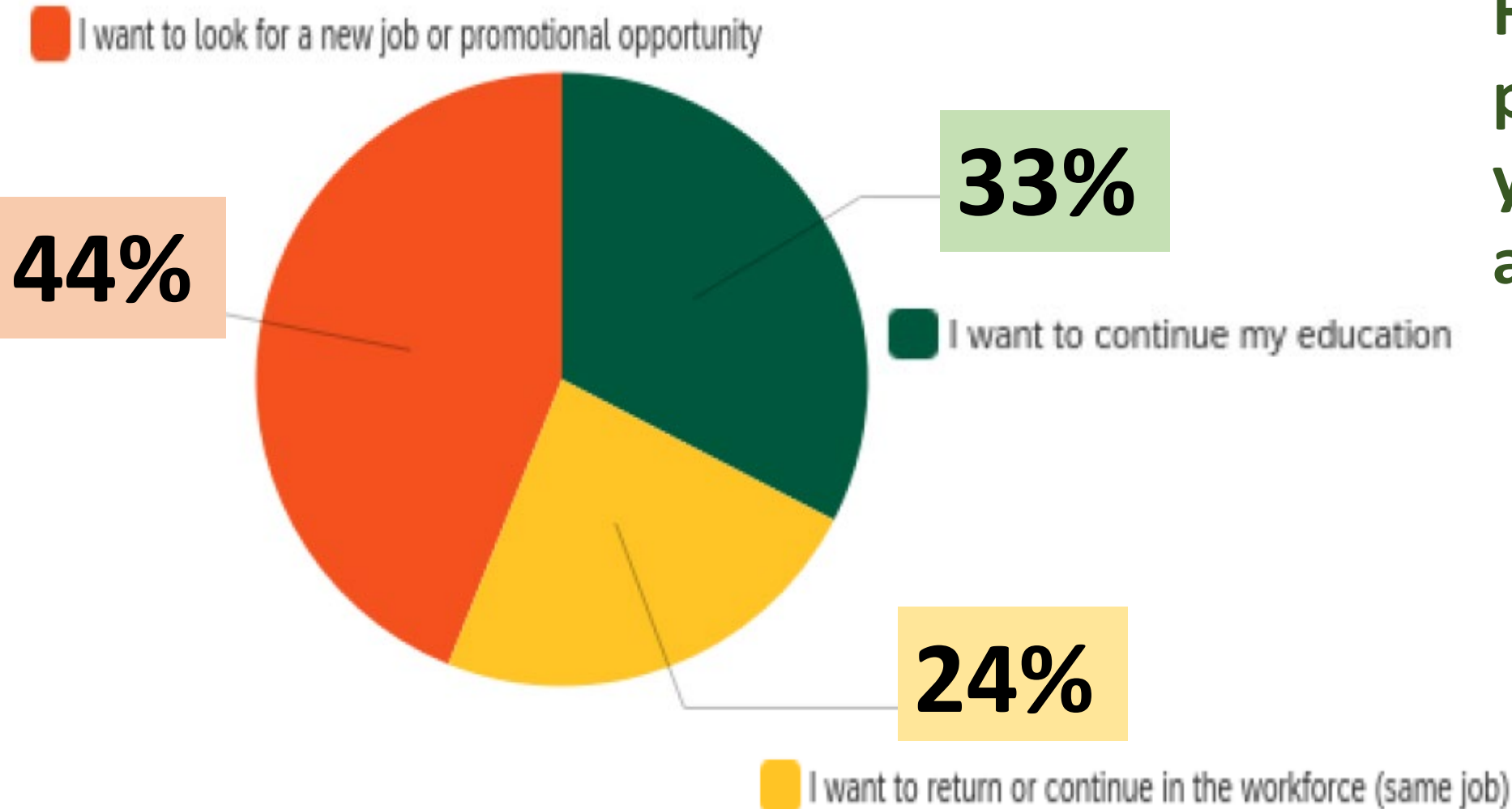
Findings: Graduate Exit Survey (Indirect)

Plan for post-graduation



How well did UAA prepared you for your chosen path after graduation?

- 57% = “very well + extremely well”
- 15% = “not well at all + slightly well”





Students largely
satisfied with
preparation, feel
welcomed, included



UAA provides core competency experiences and contributes to students' feeling prepared and ready for post-college plans; student named experiences that reflected core comp, but wanted more real-world opportunities



Your Reflections & Questions about Findings from the Graduate Exit Survey (Indirect)

What else do you want to know about student's perceptions of competencies? Their post-grad plans? And to what end?




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What else do you want to know about student's perceptions of competencies? post grad plans? to what end?










① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.


 What else do you want to know about student's perceptions of competencies? post grad plans? to what end?

Open text poll  70 responses  56 participants

-  Anonymous
The extent to which these competencies apply in their public, community, and/or civic lives, not just in the context of future employment.
-  Anonymous
Whether or not they share the value we have assigned to these competencies.
-  Anonymous
Do student understand what competencies mean?
-  Anonymous
Compare applicability of competencies across disciplines
-  Anonymous
How do these relate to them and who they want to be as a professional?
-  Anonymous
meaning of competencies to students
-  Anonymous
Ease of getting a position in their field, that utilizes their degree
-  Anonymous
Level of confidence in applying the competencies in unfamiliar situations.
-  Anonymous
Some students are aware of competencies, where others are not. The ones who are aware - where are they getting their information? That way we know where we are lacking on getting the word out.
-  Anonymous
Did students feel prepared to enter the job market (applying for jobs, preparing for interview, how to stand out, using university networks)
-  Anonymous
Did they feel supported by faculty and staff?

Sample comments...more in datafile

-  Anonymous
I want to know more about students who leave without completing a degree. Did they get what was needed to further a career? Is there a bottleneck course that they could not get through, or couldn't get it on there schedule?
-  Anonymous
Given that Alaska is ground-zero for climate change, do they think we need to add another competency related to ecological literacy?
-  Anonymous
How do students interpret these questions? Was the survey piloted? Or, was there any analysis of validity?
-  Anonymous
How relevant they think the core competencies are to their plans. How the competencies were presented during their time at UAA. How successful they are in achieving their plans.
-  Anonymous
2yrs vs 4yrs data
-  Anonymous
More description of the competencies and the process they experienced for acquiring them.
-  Anonymous
Are the competencies actually useful to them?
-  Anonymous
What are they confident in?
-  Anonymous
Given your experience at UAA, will you stay connected with your alma mater?

The background of the slide is a photograph of a university campus. In the center, there is a large, multi-story building with a sign that reads "Baskins Hall". The building is surrounded by various trees, including tall evergreens and some with autumn-colored leaves. In the distance, there are mountains under a clear sky. The foreground is slightly blurred, showing green leaves from a tree in the upper right corner.

Exploring the UAA Core Competencies Landscape... Describing the place, activities, what students are experiencing, and where... (getting closer to Direct evidence)

What activities help students develop...

How will students know...

Where & when will students experience...

How will students know what...

How often will students experience...

Are these already available?

Available to all students?

And then, discovering how changes can improve student learning and success.

Exploring the Landscape... Describing the place, activities, what students are experiencing, and where... and then exploring evidence more in-depth, discovering how changes can improve student learning & success.

- What activities help students develop...
- How will students know...
- Where and when will students experience...
- How will students know what...
- How often will students experience...
- Are these already available?
- Available to all students?



Effective Communication Activities



Exploring the Landscape...

- What activities help students develop...
- How will students know...
- Where and when will students experience...
- How will students know what...
- How often will students experience...
- Are these already available?
- Available to all students?

Creative & Critical Thinking Activities



UAA Teaching Academy
Faculty showcase on effective approaches to Teaching Creative & Critical Thinking, sessions... “TILT Your Assignment to Showcase the Creative and Critical Thinking Core Competency,” “Teaching Creative and Critical Thinking with Generative AI”

The Care Team utilizes motivational interviewing techniques to encourage students to reflect critically on behavior patterns, their hopes & goals, and promote self-efficacy in identifying steps for behavior change.

Exploring the Landscape...

- What activities help students develop...
- How will students know...
- Where and when will students experience...
- How will students know what...
- How often will students experience...
- Are these already available?
- Available to all students?

Intercultural Fluency Activities

Career Services supports the development of intercultural fluency through its "In the Workplace" workshop series.

Black in the Workplace

Join UAA Career Services and Multicultural Student Services for "Black in the Workplace".

Education Abroad



Exploring the Landscape...

- What activities help students develop...
- How will students know...
- Where and when will students experience...
- How will students know what...
- How often will students experience...
- Are these already available?
- Available to all students?

Personal, Professional and Community Responsibility Activities



MSS + Pride have a leadership series, “Empower” that focuses on developing students’ civic engagement and community leadership.

Prior to advising appointments, students are encouraged to take personal responsibility and review their DegreeWorks page and prepare a list of questions for their advisors.

UAA Core Competencies

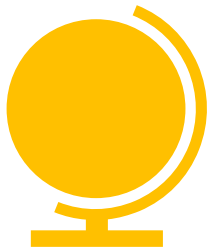
Systematic, aligned, integrated



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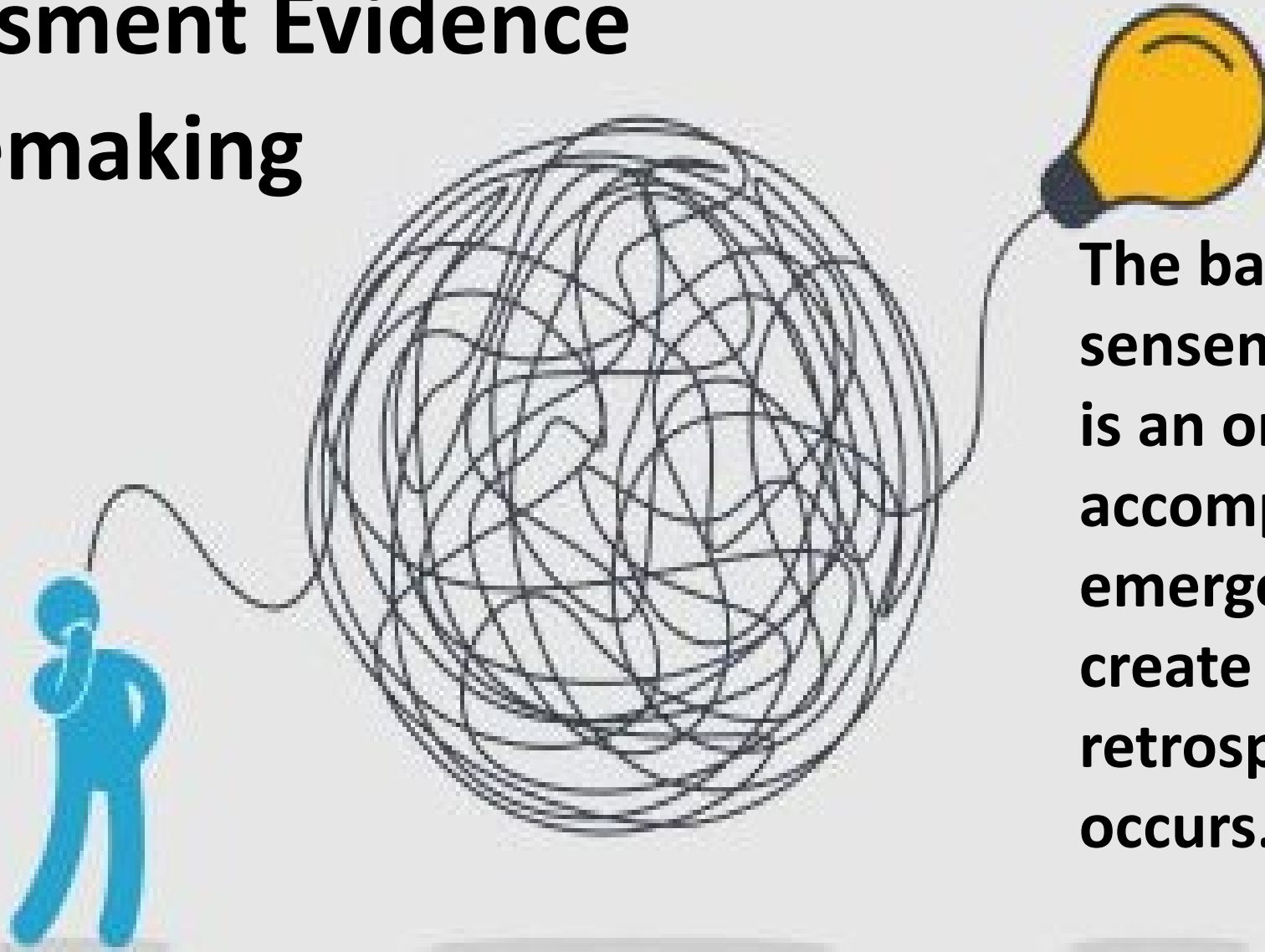
Exploring the UAA Core Competencies Landscape... Describing the place, activities, what students are experiencing, and where...

Some questions and ideas to further this work:

1. How **well** do identified activities foster competencies?
2. How **much do students value** the activity and are competencies and task clear (think TILT – clear purpose, task, criteria)?
3. Are activities **integrated, or scaffolded**, through student's educational journey?
4. What **equity concerns** do you see? How are they resolved?
5. How can you capture and reflect on students' **demonstrations of learning**?



UAA Year of Reflection: Assessment Evidence Sensemaking



The basic idea of sensemaking is that reality is an ongoing accomplishment that emerges from efforts to create order and make retrospective sense of what occurs.

**Karl E. Weick
Weick (1993, p. 635)**



Collecting your Reflections

- **What does UAA student learning and success evidence suggest?**
- **How can you use it in deep and meaningful ways?**



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Your Reflections...on evidence presented? how can you use it?

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.



Your Reflections...on evidence presented? how can you use it?

Open text poll | 38 responses | 28 participants

- Anonymous
How do we integrate competencies across all of our employees, not just those who are student facing.
- Anonymous
Can we add any data/evidence to our reflections? Like feedback from Alaska employers on our students?
- Anonymous
How do we support the students most at risk? When our practice serves 90% of our students, the 10% do not have equitable opportunities
- Anonymous
I think documentation is important. How can we engage non-student facing employees to engage with and feel engaged with students and core competencies. How can we work together to help our students and ourselves. Can we create actionable items to help continue the conversations and improve what we're doing. Are we all onboard with what is important... going in the same direction?
- Anonymous
Are we capturing why students come to the university in the first place? The focus always seems to be on support services which are important but should that be the emphasis?
- Anonymous
I'm curious about how to normalize the use of educational supports. We don't have to "know it all" and it's a strength to ask for help
- Anonymous
Do students feel like their degrees and what they learned relate to the available careers?
- Anonymous
Will all of these responses be available after for more review and reflection?
- Anonymous
Are there differences in access to services between online students and those on campuses?
- Anonymous
How does remote and hybrid learning opportunities support our non-traditional student body?
- Anonymous
I appreciate the nudge to encourage conscious, explicit awareness of the competencies during the learning process.

Sample comments...more in datafile

- Anonymous
How do we collect data regarding the usefulness and effectiveness of our assessment for students who came to take 1 or a few courses?
- Anonymous
I wonder how our students would describe/define our core competencies without any prompts or provided definitions. Would their perceptions of the competencies shift if they were rooted in their own definitions/understanding of the competencies?
- Anonymous
How did COVID and remote instruction set students back in their trajectories? And how do we catch them up and loop them back in?
- Anonymous
.
- Anonymous
How we can improve our numbers on Intercultural fluency, especially given the broad diversity of South Central.
- Anonymous
Reinforces the need to use evidence and always strive for improvement.
- Anonymous
What are the experiences/perspectives of the students who slip through the cracks. Students who do not persist in their academic career don't complete exit surveys
- Anonymous
Perhaps provide instructors with a Core competencies statement for our syllabi with ideas how to talk to students about them?
- Anonymous
Are our surveys appropriate to the degree

Equity-Centered SLO Assessment Practice

Practices include:

- Re-evaluating student learning outcomes for bias and inclusion;
- Engaging multiple stakeholders (including students) in the assessment process;
- Examining biases in survey instruments and demographic items;
- Using multiple methods (assignments, storytelling circles, rubrics, narratives, video blogs, etc.);
- Disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status;
- Engaging in multiple types of data analysis;
- Using results of assessment to make systemic change.

Institutions determine, track, report on, and are transparent about key equity indicators for student learning outcomes and institutional performance to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

(Lundquist & Heiser, 2020 <https://www.anthology.com/blog/practicing-equity-centered-assessment>)

TILting for Clarity, and Involving Students in Learning Outcomes Assessment

- **Transparent outcomes** – raise student awareness of the connection between what they're doing and their gains
- **Assessment is not something we do to students it is something we do with students**
- **Expanding the range of possible demonstrations of students' knowledge, skills and abilities**



Transparency in Assignments

Winkelmes, et al., *Peer Review*, Winter 2016

Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT): <https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>

Purpose

- Skills you'll practice by doing this assignment
- Content knowledge you'll gain from doing this assignment
- How you can use these in your life beyond the context of this course, in and beyond college



Task

- What to do
- How to do it (Are there recommended steps? What roadblocks/mistakes should you avoid?)

Criteria

- (Are you on the right track? How to know you're doing what's expected?)

Student Voice is important to equity

Racial equity necessitates recognizing that students of color are experts on their own experiences. Ask them which experiences have the highest impact on their successes and failures.

-- Shaun Harper, Professor & USC Race and Equity Center Founder and Executive Director



Ideas for Student Involvement in Assessment

“The key to effectively involving students in assessment is to intentionally match faculty need with student interest. Students can serve as statisticians, interns, and researchers.” Josie Welch, Director of Assessment, Missouri Southern State University

Examples:

- **Student-conducted focus groups in recitation sections of General Chem helped department understand students’ struggles with content and how and from whom they sought help**
- **Students invited to interpret survey data showing racial-ethnic disparities in perceptions of support, inspired collaborative effort in dept. for inclusion**



Assessment for Collective Meaning Making

Learning

Remains abstract until

Sense Making

Occurs

Individually

As a process of reconciliation and reframing against current knowledge and context

Collectively

As a collaborative and co-creative activity

Giving us internally validated and socially moderated
Meaning

© Julian Stodd

Sensemaking: Bringing it All Together

Collectively Explore Patterns in Assessment Results

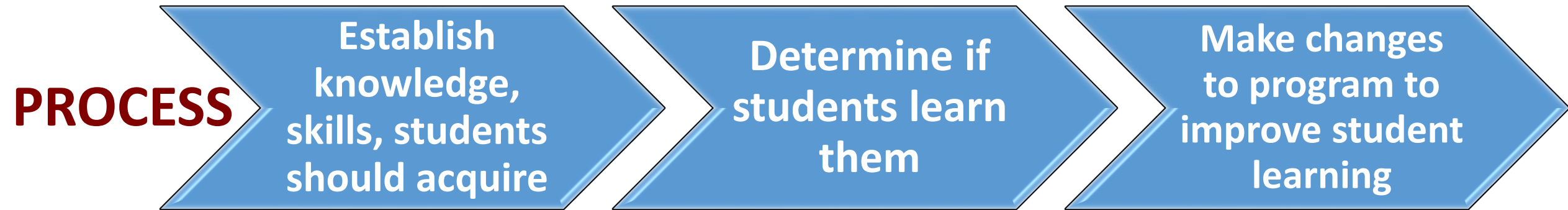
Highlight patterns of consistency, consensus, and distinctiveness

- Review outcome more deeply, in all contexts
- Disaggregate a valued outcome to see if all of the schools/UAA communities of interest achieve, or have the experience at the same level
- Examine data across outcomes in different areas to find exemplars, and where to invest

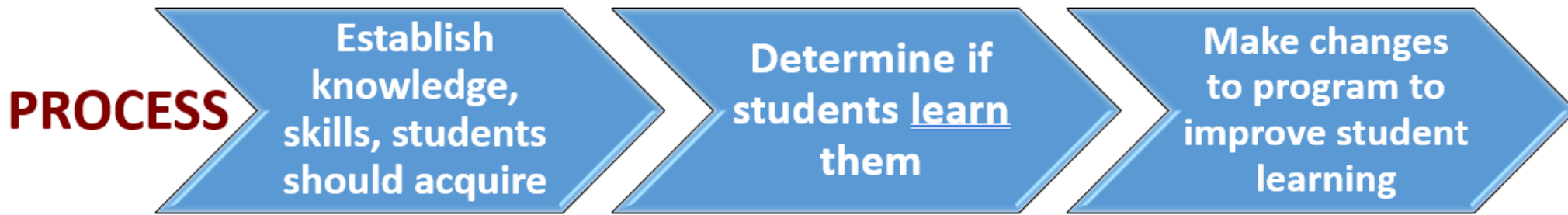
COLLABORATIVE ASSESSMENT REVIEW EXAMPLES:

- Faculty from several related departments identify a shared teaching challenge or learning gap, and brainstorm ways to gather evidence to further analyze it, or to assess potential strategies to address and assess again
- Faculty who teach different sections of a Gen Ed course (or related courses in a single department) decide on a specific concept or skill that is a key component of the course(s), and gather evidence to determine how well students learn the concept or skill across the courses

Finally, Assessment for Equitable Learning & Student Success



GOAL Assessment should be simple to conduct, and yield data that faculty trust enough to make changes based upon it.



This model fits the 3 purposes for assessment germane to academic affairs (Hong & Moloney, 2020):

- (a) large-scale assessment focused on the evaluation of institutional performance in relation to standards and with expectations for improvement,**
- (b) program evaluation with the goal of improving instruction and curricula, and**
- (c) assessment of student learning for mastery with continuous feedback.**

Central to these 3 purposes is the specification of the *use of assessment evidence for change*.

Using assessment evidence for change



Assessment should be undertaken with an expectation to make changes that improve student learning and success (Kuh et al., 2016)



Assessment is a powerful instrument for improvement.. And “in the right hands” it is potentially the best lever for change (Walvoord, 2010)



Assessment leaders who increasingly looking to data and evidence to aid in the improvement of educational delivery and quality are the “right hands” (Kinzie, 2024)

Q&A and Thank you!

Assessment is meaningful and a sustainable practice when it helps tell a story to inform others of what is happening within your course, department, unit, or institution and demonstrate the contribution to student learning and success.





Dual Mission Instituti

Dual Mission

A dual mission institution offers bachelor's degrees, career-focused associate degrees, and workforce training programs within a college or university. Distinguished by a strong regional focus, innovative and flexible credentialing practices, a commitment to open access & affordability, and deep partnerships with local employers and industry.

Dual Mission

“...a key strength in the dual mission approach [is] meeting today’s increasingly diverse students where they are. That’s especially important right now because these students – adults, parents, workers, people of color and those from lower-income households – rarely earn a ‘two-year’ degree in 2 years or a ‘four-year’ degree in 4 years – underscoring dated nomenclature and structures designed decades ago for an entirely different student profile.”

