

# UAA GRADUATE EXIT SURVEY RESULTS

Spring 2024

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Table of Contents

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Administrative Summary.....          | 2  |
| About the Graduate Exit Survey ..... | 2  |
| Executive Summary .....              | 2  |
| Respondent Profiles .....            | 3  |
| Core Competency Preparation.....     | 4  |
| Sense of Engagement .....            | 4  |
| Student Support .....                | 5  |
| Post-Graduation Plans .....          | 6  |
| Narrative Response Overview .....    | 7  |
| Data Summaries.....                  | 9  |
| Core Competencies .....              | 9  |
| Student Support Services.....        | 11 |
| Post-graduation plans.....           | 12 |
| Three Words.....                     | 13 |
| Next Steps .....                     | 13 |

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Administrative Summary

### About the Graduate Exit Survey

In support of UAA Mission Fulfillment Indicator 3, a Graduate Exit Survey was developed and administered in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024. Anticipated Spring 2024 graduates were asked to complete a short, mixed methods survey addressing their perspectives on four topics: core competency preparation, sense of engagement, student support services, and post-graduation plans. Significant incentives were offered through a drawing to those students who completed the survey by May 6, 2024. Invitations to participate were sent via email to a total of 1,031 individuals with reminders to non-completers at 2-, 4-, 7-, 9-, and 13-days post-launch. The survey had an overall participation rate of 19% (or a total of 191 completed surveys), the results of which are discussed below.

### Executive Summary

As the second iteration of this instrument, there are several positive early outcomes and some key areas for growth to potentially explore. First, while the response rate did drop from Fall to Spring, the gross number of completed surveys remained roughly the same.

Representation and balance between composition of the graduating class and survey respondents by degree level, degree type, and college are all well balanced and the minor differences across these groups does not lead to any major skewing of the data.

Mean scores around core competency preparation improved and except for Intercultural fluency, the standard deviations narrowed suggesting an increase in reliability around students' perceptions of preparation in the competencies. However, additional surveys will be needed to fully test this hypothesis. When both the quantitative and qualitative responses are reviewed, there is a strong sense that students feel engaged (both welcomed and included), and the volume and nature of the comments has strong indications from the respondents that UAA is continuing to make progress in helping students succeed.

The student support services item continues to be both a complex and insightful item. The shift in the way the question is posed from "encouraged to use" to a more general "awareness of" the four services appears to have helped. A point of interest here includes an increase in awareness around Tutoring through the Learning Commons but a decrease in usage and an odd pattern shift in the level of satisfaction. This phenomenon should be further explored.

Finally, students' post-graduation plans and sense of preparation continue to show strong evidence that respondents feel UAA is working to prepare students well for the future. The survey data show that of the UAA students who were graduating in Spring 2023 and responded to the survey, 36% want to continue their education, 46% want to look for a new job or promotional opportunity, and 18% plan to return or continue in the workforce in their same job. Regardless of their post-graduation plans, the data show that UAA is helping prepare students well with 87% responding that they feel that they are either moderately- (25.3%), very- (35.2%), or extremely-well (26.5%) prepared for their individual next steps.

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Respondent Profiles

Review of the Spring 2024 graduating class demographics compared to the demographics of the respondents shows a balanced distribution between graduating class makeup and respondent makeup. While the over response in the Graduate degree awardees appears significant, it is not as is the case with the apparent under representation of Undergraduate certificate awardees.

| Level                | Type                                 | Breakdown of Spring 2024 Graduates by Level | Breakdown of Spring 2024 Respondents by Level |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Graduate</b>      |                                      | <b>11.75%</b>                               | <b>16.23%</b>                                 |
|                      | Masters                              | 11.75%                                      | 5.92%   |
| <b>Undergraduate</b> |                                      | <b>88.25%</b>                               | <b>83.77%</b>                                 |
|                      | Associate                            | 29.92%                                      | 28.80%  |
|                      | Bachelor's                           | 41.97%                                      | 40.31%  |
|                      | Occupational Endorsement Certificate | 10.25%                                      | 12.04%  |
|                      | Undergraduate Certificate            | 3.11%                                       | 2.09%   |

Based on first degree in the application file at time of extraction  
Multiple degree earners were surveyed only once

As with degree level review, College participation was also well balanced between the composition of the graduating class and the respondents. Again, there were no significant differences in representation, but the College of Health did have slightly higher participation overall. One note about the data here is that the Graduate School composition has been removed as those students were not identified by the Registrar as potential graduates at the time of the survey and, as a result, were not sampled.

| College                            | Breakdown of Spring 2024 Graduates by Level | Breakdown of Spring 2024 Respondents by Level |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| UAA College of Health              | 33.16%                                      | 41.36%  |
| UAA College of Arts & Sciences     | 23.80%                                      | 20.94%  |
| UAA College of Bus & Public Policy | 11.23%                                      | 10.99%  |
| UAA College of Engineering         | 6.55%                                       | 4.19%   |
| UAA Community & Technical Coll     | 7.69%                                       | 7.33%   |
| UAA Kenai Peninsula College        | 5.20%                                       | 5.76%   |
| UAA Kodiak College                 | 1.46%                                       | 2.09%   |
| UAA Matanuska-Susitna College      | 4.05%                                       | 4.19%   |
| UAA Prince William Sound Coll      | 4.05%                                       | 1.05%   |
| UAA School of Education            | 3.85%                                       | 2.09%   |

As reported in BANNER

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Core Competency Preparation

Each respondent was randomly asked about their sense of preparation in a single core competency. The primary purpose of this question was to numerically score their feelings about preparation and solicit qualitative feedback from those who felt “very well” or “extremely well” about how UAA did in preparing them in that core competency. For those individuals who indicated “not well at all” or “slightly well,” a different prompt was used to gather feedback on what UAA could do to improve.

Respondents indicated their level of ‘feeling prepared’ on a 5-point Likert scale (1-5 with 1 being “not well at all” and 5 being “extremely well”). The scores were mostly consistent with the prior term. Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility stayed consistent at a mean score of 4.0. Creative and Critical Thinking scored a mean of 4.1. Effective Communication improved to a mean score of 4.0, and Intercultural Fluency rose .4 points to a new high mean score of 3.6.

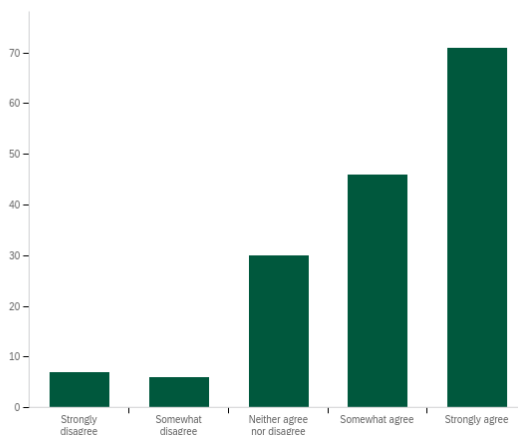
| Core Competency                                      | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--|------|--------------------|
| Effective Communication                              | 4.1  | 0.9                |
| Creative and Critical Thinking                       | 4.1  | 0.6                |
| Intercultural Fluency                                | 3.6  | 1.1                |
| Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility | 4.0  | 0.8                |

## Sense of Engagement

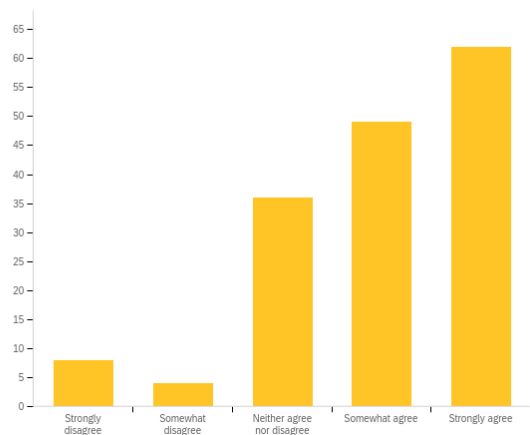
Each respondent was asked about their perspectives on feeling welcomed and feeling included. Similar to the prior sections, each respondent was presented with two separate statements about UAA making them feel welcome and UAA making them feel included. Each respondent was presented with a 5-point response scale (1-5 with 1 being “Strongly disagree” and 5 being “Strongly agree”). Following each of those questions, prompts were presented for respondents to provide narrative feedback. Respondents with high levels of agreement were prompted on what UAA did well in each of these two categories, while respondents with lower levels of agreement were prompted on what UAA could do to improve.

Overall, 73.1% of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that UAA made them feel welcome (up from 68.8% in the prior term). When asked about feeling included, 69.8% of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that UAA had made them feel included which was an improvement from 67.2% in the prior term. From a narrative perspective, students provided both rich and deep examples supporting these scores ranging from broad program examples to numerous faculty, staff, and offices who had all played a part in making them feel both welcome and included.

UAA made me feel welcomed




UAA made me feel included



# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Student Support

One of the issues resolved in this cycle of the Graduate Exit Survey was a modification to the Student Support question. Analysis and review of the findings from Fall 2023 indicated that there was a design flaw in how the question was worded. The item was redesigned for Spring 2024 to shift to an “awareness of” the service as opposed to a “know about” the service. Again, the item was a cascading question about four selected student support services: tutoring through the learning commons, disability support services, library reference/information services, and internships through career services (changed from “the career center”). The updated item flow took the student from “awareness of” to “frequency of use” to “satisfaction with those services.” Again, students were only asked about frequency of use and satisfaction with those services they were aware of from the leader question. As with the prior design, students with higher satisfaction ratings were prompted to share positive examples. Students with lower satisfaction were prompted to provide feedback on how UAA could improve.



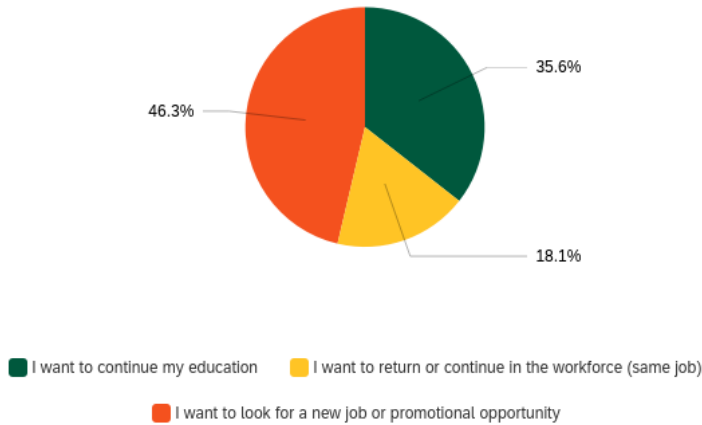
| Student Support Services               | Was aware of the service | Used occasionally or frequently | Met or exceeded my needs |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Tutoring through the Learning Commons  | 84.8%                    | 33.3%                           | 81.0%                    |
| Disability Support Services (DSS)      | 85.6%                    | 15.5%                           | 83.3%                    |
| Library Reference/Information Services | 95.2%                    | 67.9%                           | 92.4%                    |
| Internships through Career Services    | 58.4%                    | 22.1%                           | 79.0%                    |
| <b>Averages</b>                        | <b>81.0%</b>             | <b>34.7%</b>                    | <b>83.9%</b>             |

The changing of the item wording appears to have partially addressed the underlying issue from the prior survey. The average awareness of the services increased from 72.4% to 81%. On a positive note, the average satisfaction score did increase 2.8% points to a high of 83.9% with Library Reference/Information Services again scoring the highest among all four selected services. An area to note is the drop in awareness and satisfaction with the Tutoring through the Learning Commons as both frequency of use and satisfaction scores in this item dropped significantly. Another area to note in this survey is the difference between internship opportunities through career services versus internship opportunities through the various academic colleges and campuses. There may be some lingering confusion in the item design related to these parallel services.

The qualitative follow-up to how well the various support services met their needs format remained the same where students who responded with “met” or “exceeded” were asked to provide examples of what UAA did well. Correspondingly, students who responded with “did not meet” or “partially met” were prompted to provide ways UAA could have improved.

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

Planned next steps after graduation



## Post-Graduation Plans

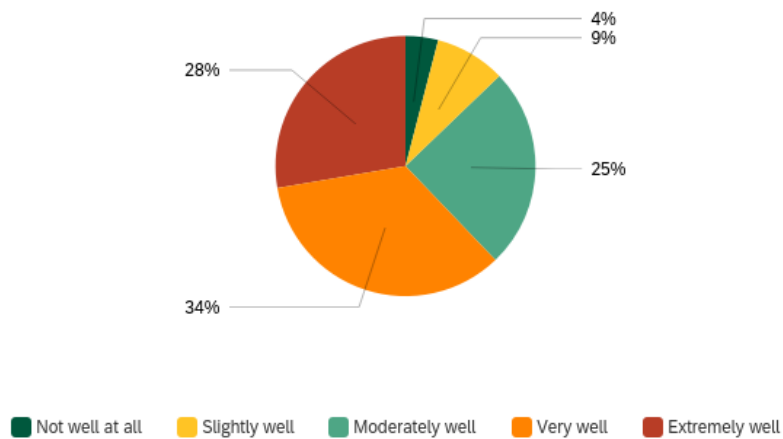
The final group of questions addressed the respondents' plans for next steps after graduation and included two items. The first item was about their plan for post-graduation. The second item asked how well UAA prepared them for their chosen path after graduation. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide a narrative response to their sense of preparedness for post-graduation, with students who responded "very well" or "extremely well" being asked what UAA did well. Students who

responded "not well at all" or "slightly well" were asked what UAA could have done to improve.

The majority of the Spring 2024 cohort (46.3%) indicated that they would seek a new job or promotional opportunity following graduation. As the workforce development institution for Alaska, this continues to be an important finding for UAA. The next largest group of the respondents (35.6%) plans to continue their education, and the remainder (18.1%) indicated that they planned to return or continue in their same job.

More than half (62.2%) of students responding indicated that they felt either very well prepared (34.5%) or extremely well prepared (27.7%) to take their selected next steps after graduating from UAA. While 12.9% of respondents indicated that they felt either "not well (4.1%)" or "slightly well (8.8%)" prepared for their next steps, it is encouraging that so many students expressed confidence in their preparation and readiness to join, return, or promote within the workforce or continue on in their education.

How well do you feel UAA prepared you for your step (based on the choices selected)



# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Narrative Response Overview

The survey was designed to prompt and capture narrative responses alongside a participant’s scored value to leading questions. Each section contained at least 1 Likert-based item contextually specific to that section. Following that scaled item, respondents who indicated the two lowest scores were presented with a “what could UAA have done better/to improve” type of prompt. For balance, respondents who provided a score in the top two categories were provided a “what was something that UAA did well” type of prompt. For the sake of privacy and anonymity, the redacted narrative responses are restricted to Cabinet level review. However, the counts of both positive-sentiment (green) and improvement-sentiment (red) responses are provided below.

| Topic                 | Prompt  | Total Responses |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|
| Core Competencies     | What is something UAA did well to help prepare you in effective communication in your life moving forward?                                    | 18              |
| Core Competencies     | What could UAA have done better to help you develop your effective communication skills?  | 1               |
| Core Competencies     | What is something UAA did well to help prepare you to apply creative and critical thinking in your life moving forward?                       | 24              |
| Core Competencies     | What could UAA have done better to help you develop your creative and critical thinking skills?   | 0               |
| Core Competencies     | What is something UAA did well to help prepare you to apply intercultural fluency in your life moving forward?                                | 12              |
| Core Competencies     | What could UAA have done better to help you develop your intercultural fluency skills?  | 3               |
| Core Competencies     | What is something UAA did well to help prepare you to apply personal, professional, and community responsibility in your life moving forward? | 27              |
| Core Competencies     | What could UAA have done better to help you develop your personal, professional, and community responsibility skills?                         | 2               |
| Sense of Engagement   | In what ways did UAA make you feel welcome?   | 77              |
| Sense of Engagement   | How could UAA improve in making students feel welcome?  | 11              |
| Sense of Engagement   | In what ways did UAA make you feel included?  | 69              |
| Sense of Engagement   | How could UAA improve in making students feel included?   | 8               |
| Student Support       | What was something UAA did well?<br><i>(regarding the services they used)</i>   | 52              |
| Student Support       | How could UAA have improved?<br><i>(regarding the services they used)</i>   | 2               |
| Post-Graduation Plans | What is something that you feel UAA did well to help you with your next step? <i>(relating to their chosen next step)</i>                     | 63              |
| Post-Graduation Plans | What is something that you feel UAA could have improved in helping you with your next step?<br><i>(relating to their chosen next step)</i>    | 12              |



## Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

While the volume of responses is not indicative of a trend or theme, the content of those comments clearly indicates that students have high praise for and satisfaction with their UAA experience. As can be the case with open-ended response items, there were some inflammatory remarks, with a small number of negative comments received focusing on topics unrelated to the survey. While a full thematic analysis was not performed on the comments, the general tone and overwhelming volume of positive comments (285 in total) continues to suggest that UAA is focusing on "Putting Students First." While the full breadth of services, academic, and program opportunities were not individually evaluated, the scope of the responses covers everything from faculty impact to the cafeteria staff. Several instances of individuals who had made a positive impact on a student were mentioned, and those comments will be forwarded to UAA leadership for appropriate recognition and follow-up. Real world and hands-on experiences were noticed throughout the comments as were how programs helped them to think critically, engage with diverse cultures and perspectives, and that UAA provided an environment that is caring, friendly, and respectful.

Within the areas and ways UAA could improve, there is a growing trend towards anti- "wokeness" and interestingly to stay away from politics. While these types of comments did not permeate the responses, there is an emerging trend that is carrying over from the prior term. Some of the more voluminous comments focused on confusing websites, lack of available staff to answer phones and provide services, and training for advisory.

While the comments are confidential, some of the tone can be seen in the following visualization about ways that UAA made them feel welcome.

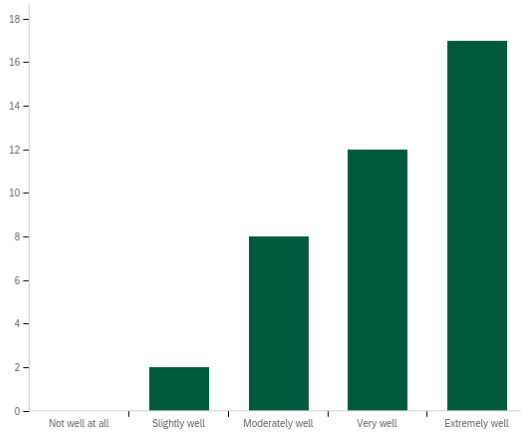


# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

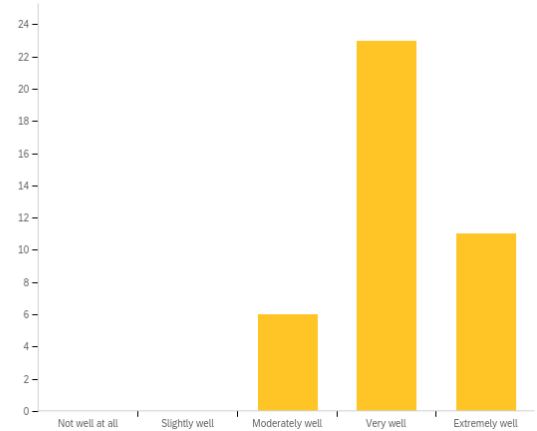
## Data Summaries

### Core Competencies

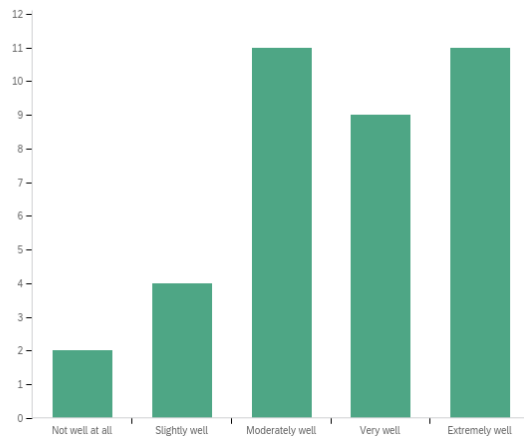
Effective Communication



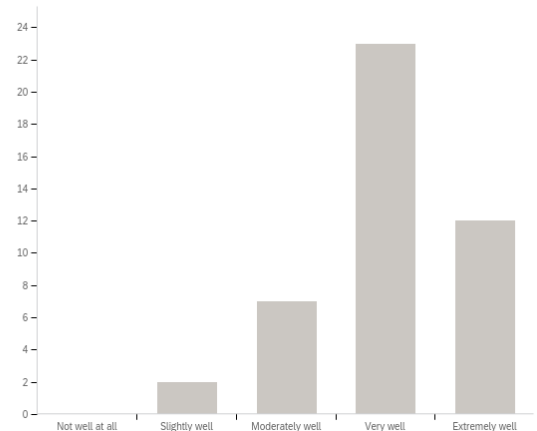
Creative and Critical Thinking



Intercultural Fluency



Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility



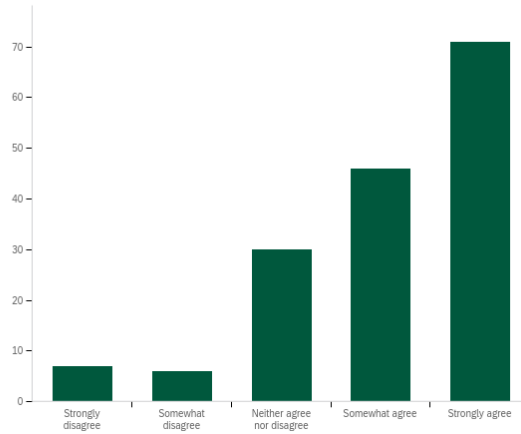
| Questions   | Mean | Standard Deviation | Count |
|---|------|--------------------|-------|
| How well do you feel you can apply <b>effective communication</b> in your life now as a UAA graduate?                                     | 4.1  | 0.9                | 39    |
| How well do you feel you can apply <b>creative and critical thinking</b> in your life now as a UAA graduate?                              | 4.1  | 0.6                | 40    |
| How well do you feel you can apply <b>intercultural fluency</b> in your life now as a UAA graduate?                                       | 3.6  | 1.2                | 37    |
| How well do you feel you can apply <b>personal, professional, and community responsibility</b> skills in your life now as a UAA graduate? | 4.0  | 0.8                | 44    |

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

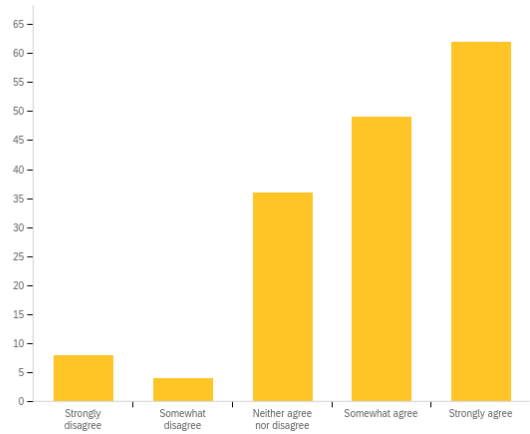
## Sense of Engagement

### UAA made me feel welcomed and included

UAA made me feel welcomed



UAA made me feel included



|                            | UAA made me feel welcomed<br>Percent Responding | UAA made me feel included<br>Percent Responding |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Strongly agree             | 44.4%   | 39.0%   |
| Somewhat agree             | 28.7%   | 25.0%   |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 18.8%   | 22.6%   |
| Somewhat disagree          | 3.8%  | 2.5%  |
| Strongly disagree          | 4.4%  | 5.0%  |

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Student Support Services

**Step 1: Which of the following learning support services were you aware of?**

| Question                               | I was aware of this service<br>(check all that apply) | I did not know about this service |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| Tutoring through the Learning Commons  | 84.8%   | 15.2%                             |
| Disability Support Services (DSS)      | 85.6%   | 14.4%                             |
| Library Reference/Information Services | 95.2%   | 4.8%                              |
| Internships through Career Services    | 58.4%   | 41.6%                             |



**Step 2: Of the services you said you were encouraged to use, how often did you use that service?**

| Question                               | I didn't use this service | I occasionally used this service<br>(in some semesters) | Frequently (nearly or every semester) |
|--|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Tutoring through the Learning Commons  | 66.7%                     | 27.0%   | 6.3%                                  |
| Disability Support Services (DSS)      | 84.6%                     | 5.7%  | 9.8%                                  |
| Library Reference/Information Services | 32.1%                     | 45.3%   | 22.6%                                 |
| Internships through Career Services    | 77.9%                     | 17.4%   | 4.7%                                  |



**Step 3: For the services you used, how well did they meet your needs?**

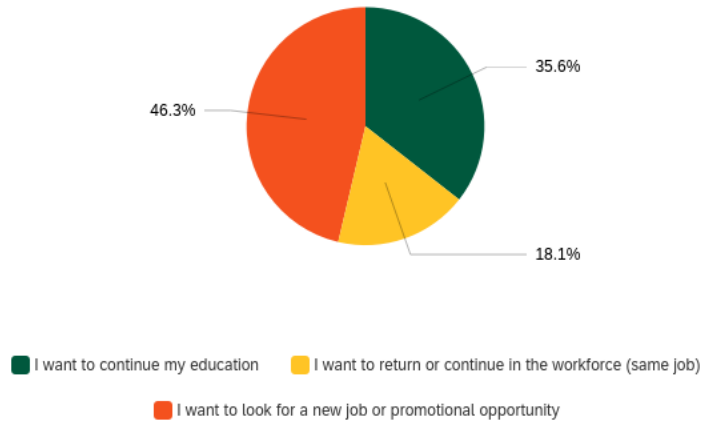
| Question                               | Did not meet | Partially met | Met my needs | Exceeded my needs |
|--|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Library Reference/Information Services | 4.8%         | 14.3%         | 52.4%        | 28.6%             |
| Tutoring through the Learning Commons  | 5.6%         | 11.1%         | 38.9%        | 44.4%             |
| Disability Support Services (DSS)      | 0.0%         | 7.6%          | 55.4%        | 37.0%             |
| Internships through Career Services    | 0.0%         | 21.1%         | 31.6%        | 47.4%             |

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Post-graduation plans

What do you think your next steps are after graduation?

Planned next steps after graduation



| How well do you feel UAA prepared you for your step?     | Not well at all | Slightly well | Moderately well | Very well    | Extremely well |
|--|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|
| I want to return or continue in the workforce (same job) | 7.4%            | 7.4%          | 25.9%           | 37.0%        | 22.2%          |
| I want to look for a new job or promotional opportunity  | 2.9%            | 11.8%         | 23.5%           | 30.9%        | 30.9%          |
| I want to continue my education                          | 3.8%            | 5.7%          | 26.4%           | 37.7%        | 26.4%          |
| <b>Average</b>   | <b>4.7%</b>     | <b>8.3%</b>   | <b>25.3%</b>    | <b>35.2%</b> | <b>26.5%</b>   |

# Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey

## Three Words



A new item in this survey was “what three words best describe your most positive experience at UAA?” This item was added at the request of several groups, including leadership and advancement, to help create a frame of what thoughts our students have as they take the next steps in their lives. 94 respondents shared, in three simple words, their thoughts on the UAA experience. The visual of those responses is presented in the adjacent word cloud.

## Next Steps

The Spring 2024 Graduate Exit Survey continues to build on the success from Fall 2023 in the scope of data collected and in demonstrating just how vital the student perspective is for faculty, staff, and administrators. There are still some lingering issues with the Student Support Services item, which is by far the most complex in the entire survey. With the conclusion of the Fall 2023 Graduate Exit Survey, the Accreditation Advisory committee was engaged in both the review of the data and, through a sub-committee, the minor revision of this instrument. The findings were shared with the UAA Executive Council as were the redacted comments for their review and consideration of next steps.

Moving forward there should be continued work to explore how the student support services question does and does not work from the perspective of gathering actionable information. There should also be a broader discussion around what information is desired and how to pose questions about internships.

In summation, continued support for this survey is clear across UAA, and as response rates improve, there may be the potential to share College-level data in a limited fashion (to protect the respondents' identities).