



MEMORANDUM

TO: UAS faculty
Deans and Directors

FROM: Rick Caulfield, Provost 

AND: Kevin Krein 
Faculty Senate President, AY14-15

DATE: August 18, 2014

RE: NWCCU Accreditation and Updating of UAS Student Learning Outcomes

As you know, the University of Alaska Southeast enjoys regional accreditation from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). In 2013 UAS submitted its *Year Three Report* to the Commission and overall received a very favorable review. In 2017 we expect to submit our *Year Seven Report* showing how—through a process of continuous improvement—we are meeting all published standards and fulfilling our university mission and core themes.

One of the most important NWCCU standards requiring attention from faculty falls under Section 2.C “Education Resources.” It relates to identification and publication of learning outcomes for each course, program, and degree offered at UAS.¹ The standard makes clear what an accredited institution is expected to provide:

2.C.2 The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.

The identification and specification of such learning outcomes is clearly the responsibility of faculty. The good news is that faculty have already identified learning outcomes for many courses, programs, and degree offerings. Our curricular review process now ensures that these are routinely identified. However, in some instances these learning outcomes need updating or may be missing altogether.

Because full compliance with this NWCCU standard is essential to our accreditation, we invite your engagement as faculty in a process during the 2014-15 academic year that will involve systematic identification and publication of course, program, and degree learning outcomes. We seek to make this process manageable—taking into account busy workloads and schedules—but also to ensure that UAS is fully compliant with accreditation standards.

To achieve this result, we propose the following:

- 1) Use Fall Convocation to develop a plan to ensure that we have current student learning outcomes for all catalog courses; any updated and/or new outcomes should be submitted using the Category B or C form
- 2) Deans will work with faculty chairs and undergraduate program heads to ensure completion as follows:
 - a) Review and updating of all 100- and 200-level course outcomes no later than December 1, 2014
 - b) Review and updating of all 300- and 400-level course outcomes no later than April 15, 2015
- 3) Graduate dean will work with graduate faculty to ensure review and updating of all 600-level courses no later than December 1, 2014

Fulfilling our obligation to meet this NWCCU standard is essential to our accreditation. Your assistance in ensuring that UAS meets this obligation is greatly appreciated. We welcome your thoughts about how best to achieve this result.

¹ <http://www.nwccu.org/Pubs%20Forms%20and%20Updates/Publications/Standards%20for%20Accreditation.pdf>