

## **Discussion on conducting a request for information to contract out some portion of developmental education**

### **A key question**

What changes does the Board want in Developmental Education? Would contracting it out be likely to result in those changes?



students successfully complete developmental coursework. About 60 percent of all associate, certificate and occupational endorsement seeking, full-time, first-time freshman require developmental coursework to be college ready; about two-thirds of these students successfully complete developmental coursework.

Course completion rates in developmental education overall are similar to those of lower division collegiate courses in math and English but developmental math is a bit lower.

Graduation rates are lower and time to graduation is lengthened for those needing more remediation. Those needing remediation in both math and English complete baccalaureate degrees at very low rates. However, more than half (51 percent) of FY13 baccalaureate degree recipients took at least one developmental course and 63 percent of FY13 associate, certificate and endorsement recipients took at least one developmental course.

Below the questions raised in the request for this discussion item are addressed:

**Are there existing remediation-type courses or**

UA cannot answer this question for private enterprise. However, Washington State Community College tuition and fees for a three credit course is currently \$320.52. A Request for Information will not request competitive bids. If institutions have a published list price for delivery, we can request that information as part of an RFI.

**What are the existing budget expenditures/revenues related to UA developmental education?**

This question was addressed in a UA report to the legislature in August 2013; that report is attached as an addendum to this brief.

UA developmental education is relatively inexpensive to deliver because adjunct faculty are heavily utilized to teach these courses. As a result tuition revenue covers the bulk (over 95 percent) of instruction and student related expenses and general funds cover the rest.

**What is the projected reduction in student attrition if a student successfully completes a course?**

Students often become ineligible to continue receiving financial aid and/or academically ineligible to pursue a degree and typically drop out when they consistently fail courses. Baccalaureate students who did not need developmental coursework were retained at a slightly higher rate than those who took and passed developmental coursework, 80 versus 76 percent, respectively. Less than half (47 percent) of 4-year degree seekers who took and did not pass developmental coursework were retained to the next fall.

Retention rates for associate, certificate and endorsement students average about 60 percent; students who took and did not pass developmental coursework were retained at a 30 percent rate to the next fall.

As these numbers indicate, successfully passing developmental classes significantly improves student retention.

**What is the reduction of student debt ratio if student spends one year less to complete a baccalaureate program?**

For undergraduate degree seeking students starting at UA between 2001 and 2006 and graduating by FY13, the average reduction in student loans taken if the time to degree for each student was reduced by one year is an estimated \$8,400 for those who received a two-year degree or a baccalaureate.

For the year 2011-12, the average debt for graduates of Alaska colleges or universities was \$28,782. Almost half (49 percent) of graduates incurred student debt.

However, the true benefit of completing a degree in four versus five years should include the opportunity cost of attending for a fifth year instead of entering the workforce after graduating in four years. For some graduates that opportunity cost can be substantial. Survey respondents from

the UA class of 2012, who worked full-time, reported an average salary of \$50,200. Engineering students reported salaries that averaged \$58,600 per year. This represents the additional cost (the opportunity costs) a student foregoes by attending each additional year to earn their degree.

**What is the reduced cost to UA as a result of keeping a student for four years rather than dropping out after a year and then UA recruiting a new student?**

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students. New student enrollments comprise approximately 16 percent of overall enrollment. Each year UA attracts approximately 3000 new freshman and another 2200 transfer students from outside the state. Clearly, the larger of the two populations are the currently enrolled students so retention is a critical issue.

Four-year private institutions spent the most to bring in new undergraduates in 2012-13, spending \$2,433 per new student at the median vs. \$457 per new student and \$123 per new student at the median, respectively, for four-year public institutions and two-year public institutions (Source: Noel-Levitz Consulting, 2011-13 Study). UA spends on average about one tenth the amount of four-year public institutions per new student (Source: UAA, Spring 2014).

**How will federal funding be affected in future years due to negative reporting to national ranking systems of continued high attrition rates?**

**Can we draw a tight enough correlation to make the leap to compare revenues derived from a student paying us \$1,000 for two remedial courses and one year of full-time tuition and then dropping out vs a student coming ready to learn, spending tuition for four years and graduating?**

Tuition and fees are revenues from students. Fees cover the costs of specific items like parking, health insurance, etc. and do not apply to instructional costs so they are not addressed here. Current resident undergraduate tuition for one year is approximately \$5,580. Tuition to complete an associates program (60 credits minimum) is \$10,080 (all lower division with FY14 tuition rates) and tuition for a baccalaureate program (120 credits minimum) is \$22,320 (50 percent lower and 50 percent upper division with FY14 rates). However, tuition does not cover the cost of instruction. About 56 percent of the cost of instruction is covered by tuition and fees and K-12 education.

**Over time, with the implementation of the common core state standards, what will be the need for remediation in ten years?**

Alaska did not adopt the Common Core Standards. Alaska adopted the Alaska Academic Standards. The new standards significantly raise the intended student learning outcomes for K-12 students above the previous standards. However, the new standards have not yet been implemented so there is no data to use to address the requested projection. Student outcomes will depend on the level of implementation of the new standards. Figure 2 in the August 2013 report in the addendum provides a speculative projection of declining developmental education needs for recent high school graduates. However, please recall that the majority of UA students needing developmental education currently are not recent high school graduates; they are 24 to 28 year olds who went to work immediately after high school and now have families.

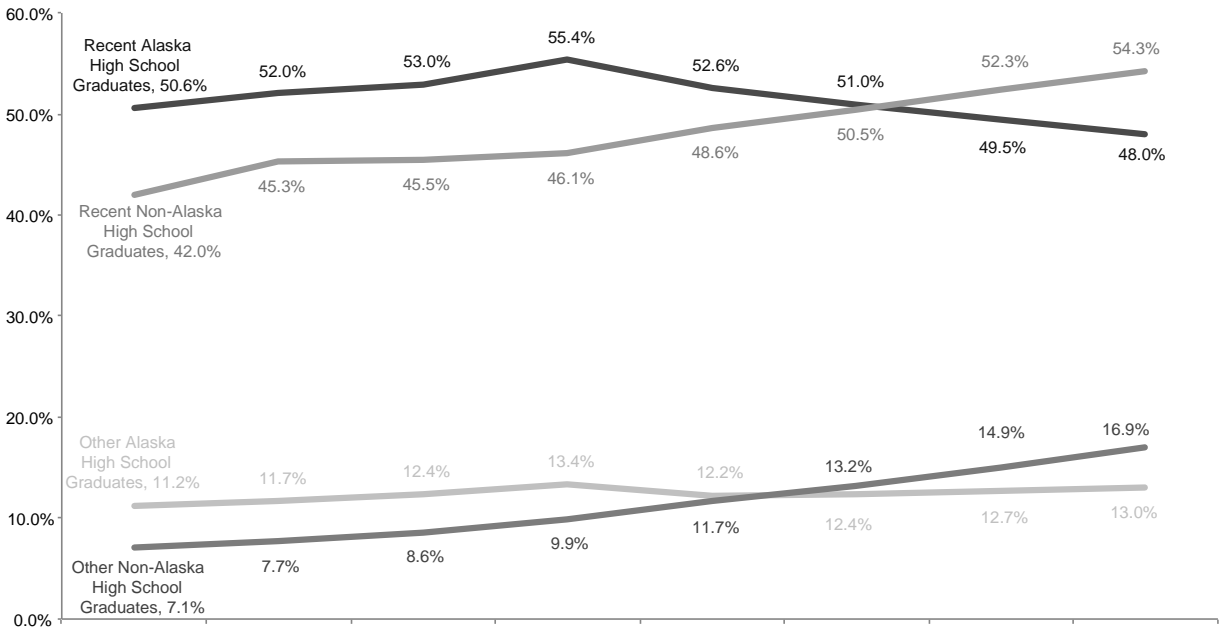
The Cost of Developmental Education at the University of Alaska  
Dana L. Thomas Ph.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs  
August 21, 2013

What is Developmental Education?

Developmental courses are those offered for credit but do not satisfy degree requirements because the content is below the collegiate level. While developmental courses are generally offered for credit and contribute toward meeting financial aid eligibility requirements for full or part time status, credits earned are not applied toward the student's degree.

Who are the students in developmental education courses?

During any given semester about 5,000 students (15% of UA headcount) take a developmental course. A majority of UA students taking developmental coursework are not recent high school graduates (nearly 30%); the majority are post traditional students commonly working adults often with families (about 70%). However, proportionally more recent high school graduates require remediation than other students seeking undergraduate degrees. Figure 1 below and Figure 2 on the following pages show the total number of students in each group and the proportion of each who take developmental



### What kind of developmental education is needed?

There are 3 levels of developmental coursework offered: nearly college ready, some remediation needed, and significant remediation needed. A majority of students need just one or two courses in math and/or English to raise them to collegiate level. About 90% of baccalaureate-seeking students needing developmental coursework of any kind, need developmental math. As shown in Table 1 below, 46% of fall 2012 recent high school graduates seeking a 4 year baccalaureate degree required preparatory coursework.





- x The relative distribution of developmental participation by subjects shown in Figure 3 assumes the annualized average change occurring between fall 2008 and fall 2012 will continue through fall 2015.

What is the Cost of UA Developmental Education for Alaska's Underprepared High School Graduates?

The cost of providing developmental instruction and support to students who need remediation is paid for by a combination of tuition revenue and State general fund support. Historically, about half the annual increase in

Figure 5. Tuition Paid for Deve

What can UA do to help better prepare Alaska high school graduates for postsecondary education?

- x Raise math preparation level of K-12 teacher graduates
- x Improve curricular alignment with K-12 to facilitate easier transitions to UA (pace is a problem)
- x Encourage high school students to complete an Alaska Performance Scholarship curriculum
- x Improve student success rates in developmental and collegiate mathematics courses through curricular reform and support mechanisms (see promising pedagogies below).
- x Encourage K-12 & UA dual enrollment

Course placements are determined based on common, nationally normed tests used across the UA system.

UA is actively working on improvement strategies that depend on cooperation between K-12 and the university. UA's participation in development of a statewide longitudinal data system called ANSWERS, which is funded by the US federal government, is a major step in developing a collaborative environment that could benefit educational and workforce programs throughout the state. The ANSWERS data system will strengthen our ability to understand and make policy decisions that encourage college completion and workforce success in Alaska.

What can the State and Department of Education and Early Development do to better prepare Alaska high school graduates for postsecondary education?

UA is committed to working in partnership with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development to overcome the challenge of underprepared high school graduates. We have established constructive working relationships between the State Board of Education and the UA Board of Regents and between Commissioner Hanley and UA President Gamble.

- x Consider actions like those in Maryland Senate Bill 740, Arkansas House Bill 1838, Indiana House Bill 1005, and Utah Senate Bill 175.
- x Have every student enrolled in an APS/college prep curriculum unless a parent opts him or her out.
- x Require four years of math in high school ensure that a full range of APS prep courses are available in every district using the Alaska Learning Network or similar alternatives as needed
- x Raise the math background of teacher hires over the next five to ten years
- x Implement college ready assessment for all students no later than 11th grade so deficiencies in math and English (reading and writing) can be addressed in the later years of high school
- x Facilitate K-12 & UA dual enrollment (e.g., Washington State Running Start Program)
- x Develop a plan, in consultation with UA, to improve college and career counseling provided to students in middle and high school—beyond improving college preparation this is important to improve the post secondary going rate in Alaska, which is among the lowest in the nation
- x Increase use of peer tutoring programs in high schools using technology where needed
- x Expand teacher hc Tf-2.623 0 TD is to all &-li324 0 TD .0011 Tc (preparation) Tj /TT1 1 Tf 4.8306 f 3.10

What promising new developmental education pedagogies UA is investigating and experimenting with that other states have examined?

- x Mainstreaming developmental students who are close to the current placement requirements, i.e. level 3 students, but require additional support for these students.
- x Providing intensive one semester sessions in math and English to more quickly qualify developmental students for collegiate level coursework. Modular approaches are also being tried where a student completes one credit at a time rather than failing a 3 credit course and having to repeat the entire 3 credit course over again.
- x Using existing, or develop new, alternative curricular pathways for students, particularly in mathematics, such as the Carnegie Quantway and Statway approaches. See <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/>
- x Improving the quality of the placement processes through technology driven review sessions for students, informing students of the consequences of placement testing so they will prepare better, and using information beyond placement scores to determine initial course placement.

UA institutions are experimenting with many different approaches to developmental education, which together encompass nearly all of the successful models that have been implemented at other colleges and universities. All are being carefully and systematically evaluated.