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Strategic Pathways is, conceptually, a call for major structural change to UA. As such, the changes are

there is a strong tendency for them to attend the UA campus closest to their high school. For example, of UAF first-time freshmen, more than 50% come from Fairbanks or the adjacent road system, and 20% come from remote Alaska areas served by UAF rural campuses. Another example is that when mechanical and electrical engineering were offered only at UAF, those programs enrolled only about 40 students from Anchorage out of a total of 450. Now that the programs are available at UAA, several hundred students are enrolled there, *and* UAF undergraduate engineering enrollments have grown substantially as well, to more than 880 (FY15 annualized headcount).

Yes, the UAA nursing program has attracted students to Anchorage as well as serving some students in their home communities. However, this program is in unusually high demand relative to the number of seats available; no other UAA program has a waiting list of hundreds. National data show that students attending public universities travel a median distance of only 20 miles from home (where they attended high school).<sup>2</sup> National data shows that the travel distances are smaller for lower-income students.

Students that leave their home communities to attend college will incur additional costs. Since many of UA students have limited financial means, it seems likely that some will not attend college if they must move to do so, or they will be at increased risk of dropping out due to financial strain. Students with financial means have the choice to leave the State.

Strategic Pathways does not directly address the large number of UA students not prepared for college and the extra costs of developmental education and repeating courses that are not successfully completed. Preparation and effective and efficient developmental education must be addressed to improve enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.

If a strong lead university (sole provider model) was established for every program, there would be no transfer problems (and no transfers) because there would be no other program within UA. However, program access for place-committed students and program completion for those who need to move within Alaska before graduating could be impaired.

The effect of other implementations of Strategic Pathways, where two or more programs continue to be offered at different Universities, is not clear *a priori*.

We think that it is very important to assess (i.e., model) the impacts of proposed changes thoroughly before UA spends a lot of time and effort in pursuing transformations that could be counterproductive. We also recommend that these assessments can be carried out for a range of options, and then those

- Will students move to another UA University or take classes on-line, if programs are not available at their regional University?
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