

University of Alaska

Workforce Development Priorities and Guidelines

September 2026

The University of Alaska is committed to preparing today's students for tomorrow, recognizing that tomorrow's careers will require advanced skills, greater knowledge, and more flexibility than ever before.

The University of Alaska's (UA) Role in Workforce Development with an emphasis on Career and Technical Education

Preparing a qualified workforce is one of the most important missions of the University of Alaska. It is the responsibility of the state's university to prepare its citizenry to be productive participants in the state's workforce, perform research and development that contributes to the state's economy, and to provide a foundational education that supports civic and community engagement. As a result, UA is the state's most comprehensive source of workforce training and career and technical education.

Recognizing workforce development is a continuum, UA established the following three-tier approach for meeting Alaska's workforce needs:

- 1) ***Pre-college programs*** connect youth with career pathways and help them prepare for academic rigors.
- 2) ***Academic certificate and degree programs*** prepare students for careers.
- 3) ***Professional development*** courses provide continuing education to Alaska's workforce.

The following supports existing priorities within each of the three universities' strategic plans. The purpose of the following is to (1) identify workforce development priorities for University leadership through labor market information, institutional data and industry feedback to support and develop programs across the statewide system (2) establish guidelines that can assist administrators, faculty and staff with decisions related to program development, assessment and funding requests.

University of Alaska Workforce Development Priorities:

- ***Economic and Community Development:*** Provide leadership and support for Alaska's economic and community development by responding to emerging industries, identifying solutions for workforce issues and meeting the needs of employers, communities and the state.
- ***Career Pathways:*** Provide a series of connected education and training programs and support services to prepare individuals for a career and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment.
- ***High Demand Jobs:*** Develop and support programs that respond to employment shortages and projected occupational demand.

University of Alaska Workforce Development Guidelines:

- a. Increase the number of completers for Alaska's high-demand workforce needs.
- b. Promote partnerships with K-12, focusing on:
 - career pathways
 - dual enrollment
 - college preparation
 - workplace readiness
- c. Collaborate with employer/industry representatives to develop or revise, and support programs that meet industry standards.
- d. Increase access and flexibility of delivery options for workforce and high-demand programs, including, but not limited to, apprenticeship, competency-based, place-based, and online and distance education.
- e. Improve persistence and efficiency of educational progress from entry to completion in workforce and high-demand areas.
- f. Support faculty professional development focused on meeting industry standards and practices.
- g. Promote student internships, practicum and experiential opportunities.
- h. Promote collaboration across the UA system between programs, schools, colleges and campuses.
- i. Support student orientation, advising, career counseling services and job placement in workforce and high-demand areas.
- j. Expand partnerships with local communities to integrate education, training and research into community service.