

*UAF College of Rural and Community Development
Northwest Campus Impact Study*

Prepared for:
Northwest Campus



Research-Based Consulting

Juneau
Anchorage

August 2009

UAF College of Rural and Community Development Northwest Campus Impact Study

Prepared for:
Northwest Campus



Prepared by:



Juneau • Anchorage

August 2009

Table of Contents

- Summary of Findings..... 1**
- Introduction and Methodology..... 3**
 - Introduction..... 3
 - Methodology..... 3
- Profile of Campus and Programs..... 5**
 - Northwest Campus..... 5
 - NWC Degrees, Programs and Events..... 5
- Student Enrollment 9**
 - Enrollment Trends..... 10
 - Student Enrollment Characteristics and Demographics..... 11
- NWC Revenue and Expenditures..... 14**
 - Revenue..... 14
 - Expenditures..... 16
- Economic Impacts of NWC 19**
- Community Value of NWC 20**
- Appendix..... 24**

Summary of Findings

Northwest Campus (NWC), part of the University of Alaska Fairbank's College of Rural and Community Development, contracted with McDowell Group, an Alaska research and consulting firm, to assess the economic and social impacts of NWC in Nome and statewide. In addition to contributing significantly to the regional and Alaska economy, NWC has a unique student population and plays an important role in providing educational and lifelong learning opportunities for residents of the region. Key findings are presented below.

NWC is a major economic contributor to the region, representing nearly \$5 million in direct and indirect impacts in FY 2008.

DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In FY 2008, NWC spent nearly \$2 million on faculty and staff payroll and benefits and an additional \$1 million on goods and services, travel, student aid and equipment in the Nome economy. Statewide, NWC had direct spending of nearly \$3.4 million.

NWC is one of the top 20 employers in Nome and the region, with an annual average of about 30 jobs. More than 90 percent of faculty and staff were based in Nome or the Bering Strait Region.

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

NWC has a significant economic impact in Alaska and specifically in the Bering Strait Region. NWC's FY 2008 total direct spending of \$3.1 million within the Nome region resulted in total economic activity of about \$3.4 million. NWC's statewide spending of \$3.4 million resulted in total economic activity of nearly \$5.0 million in FY 2008.

NWC has a high regional market penetration rate and serves a unique student population, including residents of 75 different Alaska communities.

NWC's average Fall semester enrollment ranges from 300 to 500 students, and NWC provides services for an additional 50 to 100 students in its service area. While three-quarters of NWC students are residents of the Bering Strait region, the campus serves students in 75 Alaska communities, 13 students from other states and six international students.

The campus has a six percent regional market penetration rate (percentage of adults age 18 and over in the region attending classes). In some communities, nearly one out of ten residents were enrolled in an NWC class in the Fall 2008 semester. Many residents are lifelong learners, taking one or two classes a year for a substantial portion of their adult life.

The NWC student population is diverse and non-traditional. With an average age of 38, they tend to be older than the average University of Alaska student (age 31); nearly 25 percent are over age 50. Most students are part-time and non-degree seeking. Three-quarters are female and about half are Alaska Natives.

NWC enhances the quality of life in the community and region.

A group of knowledgeable industry, educational, and Native representatives were interviewed to understand their opinions concerning the contributions of NWC to community and the region. Two particular comments captured many of the interviewees' feelings. One interviewee stated that without NWC, *"we wouldn't have learning centers in villages. There would still be distance delivery, but no one-on-one attention to inspire people to continue. There would be no one to coordinate classes, and help people get set up on computers. People would stop out of frustration with no one there to help. People just wouldn't go to school. There would be less people certified to do anything."* Another mentioned that *"Nome is 525 miles from Anchorage. People want to learn. People want to improve their skills. We would lose a lot of people who would go out of Nome to improve their skills and education and then not come back. We would have a loss of our own people."* Key themes from these interviews included:

- NWC helps to bridge the gap between high school graduation and college for many of the region's residents. The ability to get students started locally and have early success in education is important.
- Residents of the region are lifelong learners and appreciate the ability to be degree-seeking students and take for-credit classes, as well as classes with practical applications or for personal enrichment.
- The ability to remain in their home communities, work and raise their families while receiving an education is a significant benefit.
- Dual credit classes for high school students not only provide challenging educational opportunities, but students come away with college credits (saving them time and money), and with greater confidence in their ability to pursue college.
- NWC faculty and staff are valuable members of the community. They participate in college-related activities and events, and in other civic events, such as the arts and music.
- NWC improves the quality of life in Nome and for the region through its economic and cultural contributions.

Introduction and Methodology

Introduction

Northwest Campus (NWC) contracted with McDowell Group to assess the economic impact of the campus on the regional economy and analyze the school's qualitative benefits to residents of the Bering Strait region. Economic impacts include NWC's direct spending on goods and services, capital expenditures, payroll and benefits, as well as the circulation of those dollars throughout the regional and statewide economies.

Qualitative benefits are more difficult to measure, but are equally important. They include the campus' production of educated individuals who will enhance the region's workforce and its quality of life in terms of academic opportunities and lifelong learning.

NWC is a community campus within the University of Alaska Fairbanks' (UAF) College of Rural and Community Development (CRCDD). UAF is part of the University of Alaska (UA) system, the only public university in Alaska, serving nearly 47,000 students annually throughout the state via three regional hubs: UAF, University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) and University of Alaska Southeast (UAS). Serving roughly 300 to 500 students each semester, NWC offers access to a range of degree and certificate programs on campus as well as at UAF and UAA via distance learning opportunities. In fact, one-fifth to one-quarter of the students served by NWC are actually enrolled in programs at UAF or UAA, but use NWC courses and facilities to fulfill general requirements and complete distance delivery classes. The Nome-based campus serves approximately 15 villages in the Bering Strait region.



Methodology

The economic impact section of this study examines the cumulative effects of NWC-related employment, payroll and expenditures within the Nome census area and statewide. This study is similar to the impact analysis of the UA statewide system, conducted by McDowell Group in 2007. Following the general methodology of that study, regional and statewide economic multipliers were applied to NWC-associated employment and expenditures to measure indirect and induced impacts. Multipliers were derived from a widely used input/output model, IMPLAN, along with McDowell Group's project experience and analysis.¹ IMPLAN multipliers may be modified, based on McDowell Group experience in measuring multipliers in Alaska rural and urban economies. To assist McDowell Group with its study, NWC, UAF's CRCDD, UAF

¹ Minnesota IMPLAN Group, Inc., IMPLAN Professional version 2.0

Planning Analysis and Institutional Research, UAF Financial Services, and UA Statewide Budget and Planning provided information on revenue, expenditures (including detailed campus spending and employee payroll and benefits), student enrollment and demographics.

Qualitative information was gathered through interviews with local government officials, community leaders and prominent individuals within the business community to capture their opinions on NWC's impacts on the Bering Strait region.

Profile of Campus and Programs

Northwest Campus

NWC is located in Nome on the southern coast of the Seward Peninsula in Western Alaska. Communities in the NWC service area are spread out over 80,000 square miles of land in the Bering Strait region. The campus occupies nine buildings, including classrooms and administrative facilities, computer/digital imaging labs, science lab, two conference rooms with video-conference capabilities, an art studio, and space for the Cooperative Extension Service and Marine Advisory Program offices. In addition to its own academic and vocational programs, NWC provides a venue for locally organized events, workshops and meetings. NWC's mission is to "provide excellent opportunities for academic, vocational, and community education to the Bering Strait Region." The school was brought under the umbrella of UAF's CRCD in 1987. Previously, the institution had served area students for roughly ten years as Northwest Community College.



NWC Degrees, Programs and Events

NWC offers students access to a range of programs, from vocational certificates to master's degrees. The campus partners with regional organizations and other University campuses to provide both on-site and off-site access for traditional degree-seeking students as well as delivery of programs that address industry-specific needs in the Bering Strait region. For example, students in Nome can now complete a Certified Nursing Assistant certificate from NWC leading to an Associate of Applied Science degree in nursing.

Unique programs include the High Latitude Range Management (HLRM) program where students learn field-based techniques to inventory and monitor plant and animal populations. Training includes sustained yield concepts and the management of animal populations in the north. Students will be qualified to work with the region's reindeer herds. Future plans include a USDA-certified slaughter and meat cutting certificate, which will be offered in cooperation with the state.

NWC has graduated between one and 16 students annually between 1999 and 2008. Over the ten-year period, NWC awarded 28 certificates, 27 associate's degrees and 13 bachelor's degrees. Half of all degrees,

certificates and credentials awarded by NWC in FY 2008 were in programs qualifying recipients to work in high demand job area careers.

NWC partners with both local school districts (Nome Public Schools and Bering Strait School District) to provide vocational training for high school students. Programs have included Introduction to Legal Careers, Fundamentals of Aviation, Early Childhood Education, Welding and Emergency Trauma Training. When appropriate, students receive dual high school and college credits. NWC also offers classes specifically designed for Bering Strait School District students, such as Developmental Math.

Academic Programs

In general, NWC degree and certificate programs are offered in conjunction with UAF and UAA, requiring students to take a mixture of in-person and distance learning courses. Academic programs accessible from NWC include:

- **Certificate** (Information Technology, Health Education, Rural Human Services, High Latitude Range Management)
- **Associate of Arts** (General Studies)
- **Associate of Applied Science** (Information Technology, Health Education, Rural Human Services, and Nursing)
- **Bachelor of Arts** (Elementary Education, Rural Development, and Social Work)
- **Master of Arts** (Rural Development)

With support from Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation, NWC is developing local curriculum that will be part of UAF's Marine Advisory Program (MAP). MAP is a university-based, statewide, outreach and technical assistance program focused on use and conservation of Alaska's marine and coastal resources.

Distance Education Program

In addition to traditional, classroom-based courses, NWC offers a variety of distance education courses. Distance education includes audioconference, online and Elluminate Live (E-Live) classes. E-Live classes are web-based and delivered in real-time so that students and the course instructor are interacting simultaneously from different physical locations.

NWC's distance education program works in two directions. It extends campus courses and degree programs to students who are unable to get to the Nome campus because of geography or schedule. It also allows students to take courses and complete degree programs offered through other UA campuses.

As with the rest of the UA system, distance education at NWC is increasing in popularity. In terms of semester credit hours, NWC student enrollment in distance education courses grew by nearly 20 percent between Fall 2007 and Fall 2008 and accounted for one-third of all Fall 2008 credit hours.

Lifelong Learning and Regional Training

Not measured by standard university metrics are NWC's lifelong learning and regional training efforts. Lifelong learning courses and public lectures are available to the general public and provide opportunities for increased community engagement. Classes are generally taught by part-time adjunct professors in Nome or in surrounding villages, and include topics such as ceramics, software applications, first aid and Alaska Native languages, among others.



NWC also provides specialized training for businesses, agencies and schools in the Bering Strait region. These trainings are conducted through partnerships with area organizations and help strengthen the regional workforce. Some examples of past training programs include construction technology, computer networking and troubleshooting, small engine repair, applied business, leadership and supervision skills.

NORTHWESTERN ALASKA CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER

NWC has been a strong supporter of vocational training and workforce development in the community. It received an \$800,000 grant to renovate three shop spaces for welding, carpentry and small engine repair at Nome Beltz High school in 2006. After the shops were completed, there was strong demand for training from regional residents living outside of Nome, but NWC had difficulty finding suitable accommodations. Working with the City of Nome, the Northwest Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC) was able to secure a grant from the State of Alaska to fund \$3 million of the \$3.8 million cost of a new dormitory facility. In FY 2008, NWC partnered with NACTEC and the City of Nome to secure the remaining funding to help complete dormitory space for the center.

NWC received a \$797,700 federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant to support completion of the NACTEC House. All but approximately \$12,000 was used to purchase construction materials for the project. Construction began in April 2007, and the grand opening for the NACTEC House was in September 2008. In consideration for the grant funding, NACTEC made space available for use by NWC training and educational programs. The dormitory provides housing that is safe and affordable for high school students and adult students from the Bering Strait region who travel to Nome to attend training programs and classes offered by NACTEC and NWC.

Events

NWC coordinates and hosts a variety of conferences and events each year, bringing together residents of the Bering Strait communities and visitors from around Alaska. The following are a sample of recent and upcoming events at NWC.

- In Spring 2009, NWC partnered with Bering Strait Development Council to host the 2nd Western Alaska Interdisciplinary Science Conference and Forum. Attracting roughly 150 attendees, the conference examined regional scientific efforts and traditional knowledge in approaching resource management.
- The campus recently wrapped up its 2007-09 International Polar Year Speaker Series, which drew 1,400 attendees from Nome and other communities in the Bering Strait region. NWC plans to introduce a new program in Fall 2009 titled the Bering Strait Leadership Speaker Series.
- In 2009, NWC will be conducting a Field Sampling Institute on community-based environmental health research and a week-long Arctic Survival course. Both initiatives are open to the public and offer academic credit to participants.
- In June 2009, NWC hosted the “X-treme Math X-pedition Camp” for 12 high-school-age students from seven communities in the region. Participants worked with UAF field researchers learning how math is incorporated into their work. Students were housed at NACTEC House.

Student Enrollment

Enrollment

On average, NWC enrolls 300 to 500 students each semester. This student population includes all students receiving instruction from NWC, regardless of their degree program location. For example, some NWC students are enrolled in degree programs based in Fairbanks or Anchorage, but complete general requirements at NWC. One-fifth to one-quarter of the NWC student population enrolls in programs at other UA campuses. Student enrollment at NWC is measured in two ways: headcount and student credit hours (SCH). Headcount measures the number of students enrolled in any number of classes, while SCH accounts for the number of course credits each student is taking. For example, ten students taking one three-credit course each is reflected by a headcount of 10 and total SCH of 30. Ten students taking 12 credits each (full-time) is reflected by a headcount of 10 and total SCH of 120. Within the higher education arena, SCH is considered the more accurate measure of a school's production and is more closely associated with its revenue stream. Both measures will be presented in the following sections.

Additional Students Served

Beyond published student enrollment data, NWC serves another 50 to 100 students annually. Although these students are not enrolled in classes at NWC, they live in NWC's service area and fall under campus administrative jurisdiction. NWC registers them for courses at other UA campuses, collects their tuition payments and provides advising, among other services. In FY 2008, NWC served 50-60 students who were not enrolled at the campus. These students are not reflected in the enrollment and financial data in this report.

Regional Market Penetration

One measure of the effectiveness of NWC's ability to attract students is its regional market penetration rate. Market penetration rate is calculated by dividing the number of adults (age 18 and older) in the NWC service



area by the number of annual unduplicated students. According to NWC, the penetration rate for the academic year (Summer 2008, Fall 2008 and Spring 2009) was 6 percent. The ability of NWC to facilitate that many adults (mostly in remote communities) taking a college class is a significant accomplishment. According to the campus director, many residents of the region take one or two classes per year on an ongoing basis for decades because it enriches and

improves their lives. This tendency for lifelong learning is illustrated by the high average age of NWC students (38 years old), one of the highest in the UA system. Approximately one-quarter of students were over the age of 50 in FY 2008.

Enrollment Trends

While student enrollment at NWC has fluctuated over the past five years, the trend in recent years has been a significant increase in student counts and credit hours. During the Fall 2008 semester, NWC enrolled 490 students (up 88 percent from 2005) who were registered for 1,194 SCH.

Compared to Fall 2007, this represents a 6 percent decline in student headcount, yet a 13 percent increase in SCH, suggesting that more students were enrolled in a heavier course load.

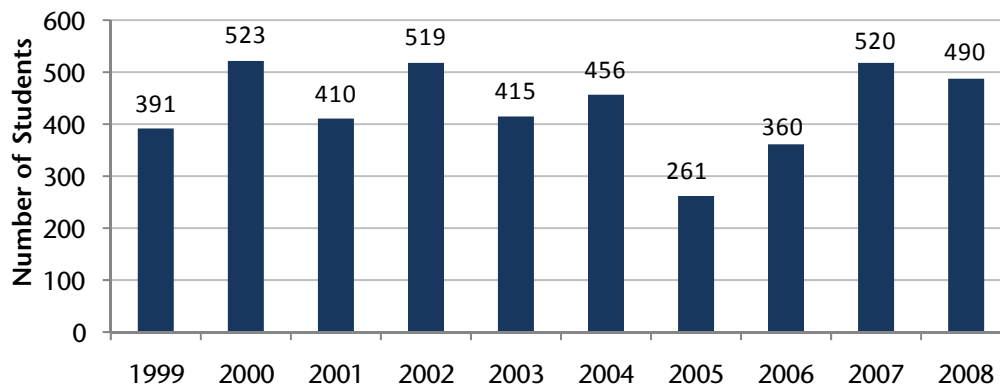
Table 1
Student Enrollment Trends, Fall 2004 - Fall 2008

Year	Count	Credit Hours
2004	456	1,186
2005	261	688
2006	360	711
2007	520	1,056
2008	490	1,194

Source: UA Statewide Planning and Budget.

The following chart presents trend information for fall semester student enrollment.

Figure 1
Student Enrollment Trends, Fall 1999 - Fall 2008



Source: UA Statewide Planning and Budget.

Student Enrollment Characteristics and Demographics

Student Enrollment Characteristics

Nearly all NWC students took classes on a part-time basis, while 5 percent were enrolled as full-time students. Whether their degree program was based at NWC or at another UA campus, 82 students enrolled at NWC were degree-seeking.

Eighty-six students took at least one non-credit course for personal enrichment (such as ceramics or a language) or for skill-building to enhance employment potential (such as machine maintenance, construction, or computer technology).

Table 2
Student Enrollment Characteristics, Fall 2008

	Count	% of Total
For-credit enrollment		
Part-time	467	95%
Full-time	23	5
Degree-seeking*	82	17
Non-degree seeking	408	83
Total enrollment in for-credit classes	490	100%
Total enrollment in non-credit classes**	86	

Source: UAF Planning, Analysis, and Institutional Research and UA in Review, 2009.

*Degree-seeking status is determined at the UA statewide level; the students counted as degree-seeking are enrolled at NWC but may be degree-seeking at any of the three MAUs (UAF, UAA, UAS).

**Non-credit head count is an unduplicated head count of all students taking one or more noncredit courses. Some of these students may also have been enrolled in for-credit classes.

Student Demographics

STUDENT ORIGIN

In Fall 2008, 96 percent of NWC students originated from within the state of Alaska; 74 percent were from within the NWC service area. Approximately 22 percent of students originated from other areas of the state including Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau.

Table 3
Enrolled Student Origin, Fall 2008

	Enrollment	% of Total Enrollment
In-state enrollment		
Northwest Campus service area	361	74%
Other Alaska communities	109	22
Total in-state enrollment	470	96%
Out of State	13	3
International	6	1
Unknown	1	<1
Total enrollment	490	100%

Source: UAF Planning, Analysis, and Institutional Research.

COMMUNITY ORIGIN

The following table shows the number of students from communities in the NWC service area. Students from 75 Alaska communities were enrolled at NWC in Fall 2008. One out of five students originates in the NWC home community of Nome. As a percentage of the population, participation in classes at NWC is high among residents of the area. For example, nearly one out of ten residents of Elim (population 280) and Brevig Mission (population 350) were enrolled at NWC in Fall 2008.² A complete list of in-state student communities of origin is available in the appendix of this report.

Table 4
Communities of Origin and Student Count within Service Area, Fall 2008

	Students	% of All NWC Enrolled Students
Nome	92	19%
Stebbins	35	7
Savoonga	33	7
Brevig Mission	28	6
Elim	25	5
Unalakleet	24	5
Saint Michael	23	5
Shishmaref	21	4
Gambell	18	4
Koyuk	14	3
Golovin	11	2
Teller	10	2
Little Diomede	8	2
Shaktoolik	8	2
White Mountain	6	1
Wales	5	1
Total in service area	361	75%

Source: UAF Planning, Analysis, and Institutional Research.

*Origin is the location of a student when first enrolling at the university and may differ from a student's current citizenship, visa, or state residency status. For Alaskan students entering the university, the origin is recorded as a city or village. For students of other states, the origin is recorded as the state from which the student comes. In the case of a foreign student, the origin at entry is recorded as the student's home country.

² Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development population estimates.

OTHER DEMOGRAPHICS

NWC has a diverse student body. In Fall 2008, the average age among NWC students was 38 years old, eight years older than the average UA student. Approximately one-quarter of students were over the age of 50, while only 11 percent were between the ages of 20 and 24. Nearly three-fourths of enrolled students were female. Alaska Native students made up roughly half of the population. Forty-six percent identified themselves as White and 2 percent as another ethnicity.

Table 5
Student Demographics, Fall 2008

	Count	% of Total
Gender		
Female	360	73%
Male	130	27
Ethnicity		
White	226	46%
Alaska Native	220	45
Other	11	2
Not reported	33	7
Average age		38 years old

Source: UA Statewide Planning and Budget.

NWC Revenue and Expenditures

Direct impacts of NWC include spending related to college activities: payroll, goods and services, and student aid, among others. Direct impacts also include NWC expenditures on capital projects, such as the construction of new buildings and the purchase of equipment.

Revenue

Funding for NWC comes from a number of sources, including State of Alaska general funds, student tuition, federal receipts and auxiliary receipts. The following table details NWC revenue sources and funding amounts for FY 2007 and FY 2008.

Total revenue for NWC increased from \$2.2 million in FY 2007 to \$3.3 million in FY 2008. The FY 2008 figure includes a \$797,700 federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant to support construction of student housing for the Northwest Alaska Career and Technical Center. (Not counting the HUD grant, revenue increased by 12 percent from FY 2007).

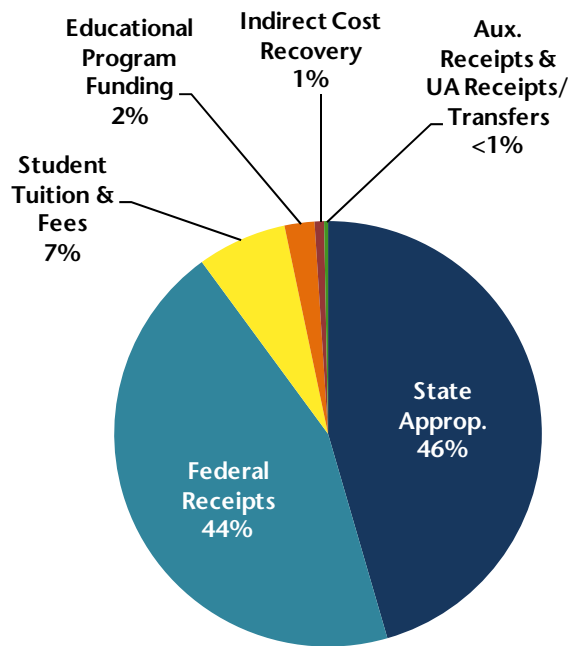
Table 6
Revenue Sources, by Funding Source, FY 2007 – FY 2008

Source	FY 2007	FY 2008
Unrestricted		
State appropriations	\$1,453,500	\$1,499,400
Student tuition and fees	172,600	224,000
Educational program funding	75,000	75,000
Indirect cost recovery	14,800	23,500
UA receipts	6,000	1,700
UA intra-agency transfers	0	200
Restricted		
Federal receipts	\$504,700	\$1,464,000*
Auxiliary receipts		
	3,800	7,900
Total revenue	\$2,230,400	\$3,295,700

Source: UAF College of Rural and Community Development. Revenue figures have been rounded.

*This includes a \$797,700 federal grant to support construction of student housing for the Northwest Alaska Career and Technical Center.

Figure 2
Revenue Sources, by Percentage of Total Funding, FY 2008



Description of Revenue Sources

State appropriations include receipts from the State of Alaska’s general operating fund.

Federal receipts include restricted funds, such as grants and contracts, where spending is dictated by the specific federal funding agency.

Student tuition and fees are generated by tuition charged to students for instructional programs, as well as fees charged for specific activities or items, such as materials and labs.

Educational program funding is revenue from a variety of sources used to fund specific educational activities.

Indirect cost recovery revenues are generated from federal and other restricted grants, and are used to help offset administrative and support costs that cannot be efficiently tracked directly to grant programs. When the university receives a grant, it records the revenue for the actual project in restricted receipts and the revenue for indirect costs in indirect cost recovery.

Auxiliary receipts are associated with all self-supported activities of NWC. They include all revenues from bookstore and other operations.

UA receipts and transfers include unrestricted revenues from course and facility-use fees, educational testing fees, revenue from administrative services and other miscellaneous sources.

Expenditures

NWC-related expenditures include spending on faculty and staff payroll, goods and services, travel, student aid and equipment. In FY 2008, NWC spending totaled approximately \$3.3 million, with the majority of spending (\$2.06 million) on wages and benefits. Expenditures on contract services amounted to nearly \$1 million, while travel expenses were \$100,000, and commodities \$91,000. Other spending included student aid (\$21,000) and equipment (\$6,700). NWC had no capital expenditures in FY 2008.

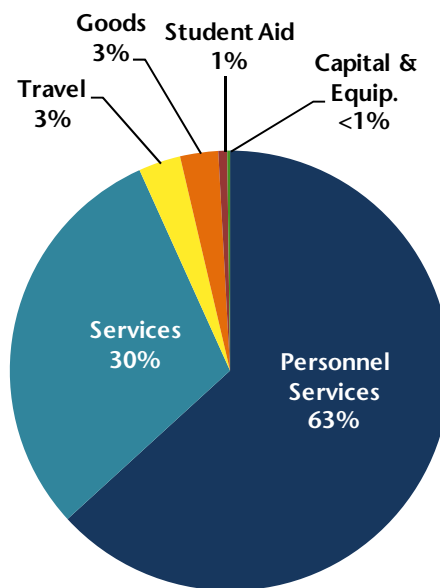
Table 7
Expenditures, by Type, FY 2008

Type	Amount	% of Total Spending
Personnel services (wages and benefits)	\$2,062,800	63%
Contracts (services)	980,300	30
Travel	101,200	3
Commodities (goods)	91,300	3
Student aid	21,000	1
Equipment	6,700	<1
Total expenditures	\$3,263,300	100%

Source: UA Statewide Planning and Budget.

Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of NWC spending was allocated to personnel services, which includes employee payroll and benefits. Thirty percent was spent on services.

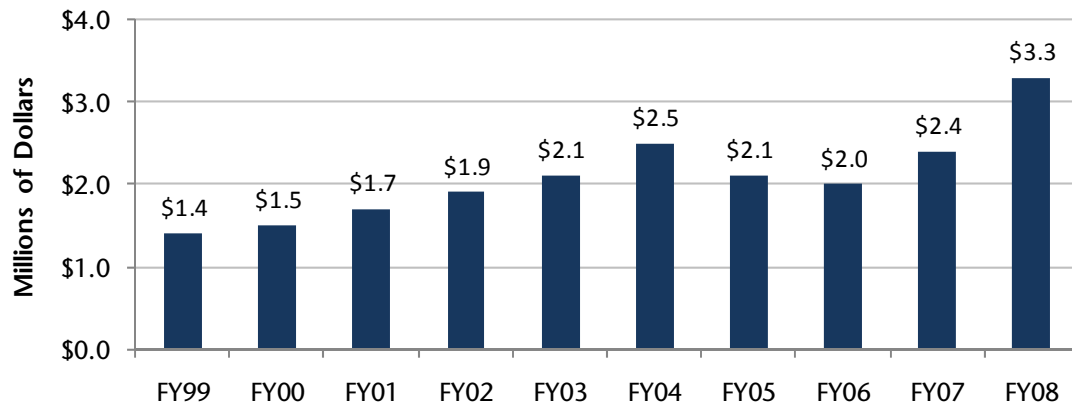
Figure 3
Expenditures, by Percentage of Spending, FY 2008



Expenditure Trends

NWC expenditures remained fairly stable between FY2002 and FY 2007, ranging from \$2.0 million to \$2.4 million annually. Spending in FY 2008 was substantially higher at \$3.3 million. As previously mentioned, NWC received a \$797,000 HUD grant in FY 2008. Minus the HUD grant, expenditures would have been about \$2.5 million.

Figure 4
Expenditure Trends, FY 1999 - FY 2008



Source: UA Statewide Planning and Budget.

Spending on Goods and Services

The study team analyzed detailed spending data provided by UAF Financial Services for NWC non-personnel spending. Ratios were developed for expenditures by location and applied to the NWC spending data in Table 7 of this document.

NWC had non-personnel expenditures of approximately \$1.2 million in FY 2008. Of these non-personnel expenditures, approximately \$1.0 million occurred in Nome. A substantial portion of this figure (\$785,000) was spent on the purchase of materials to complete construction of the NACTEC House. Approximately 90 percent of all NWC non-personnel expenditures were made within the state of Alaska.

NWC spent slightly more than \$1.0 million in FY 2008 with 36 Nome and regional entities or businesses, representing 86 percent of NWC non-personnel spending. Not surprisingly, most non-regional, in-state expenditures were made with Anchorage and Fairbanks businesses.

Employment and Payroll

NWC is one of the top 20 employers in Nome with a significant contribution of payroll to the community.

Employment during the Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 semesters averaged from 30 to 36 jobs. Typical staff levels are illustrated in the table below. In Spring, 2008 the campus employed 7 regular faculty and 16 regular staff, as well as 7 adjunct faculty and 4 temporary staff. When the full academic year is considered (winter break and summer staffing employment is lower), annual average employment at NWC is about 30 people.

In the Spring of 2008, the majority of all faculty and staff (26) were Nome-based, with 6 based elsewhere in the region and 2 based outside the state.

Table 8
Employment, Spring 2008

	Employment
Faculty regular	7
Faculty temporary	7
Staff regular	16
Staff temporary	4
Total employment	34

Source: UAF College of Rural and Community Development.

Nearly all NWC payroll and benefits (99 percent) were paid to residents of the Bering Strait region, with 92 percent paid to Nome-based faculty and staff.

Table 9
Payroll and Benefits, FY 2008

	Payroll
Regionally-based staff	\$2.0 million
Nome-based staff	\$1.9 million
Other Alaska and US-based staff	\$60,000
Total payroll and benefits	\$2.06 million

Source: UAF College of Rural and Community Development.

Economic Impacts of NWC

The economic impact estimates below are based on a widely used input/output model, IMPLAN, which estimates multipliers for determining the effects of employment and payroll on regional and statewide economies. There are three types of economic impacts related to IAC spending and employment:

- **Direct impacts:** Campus spending on goods, services, student aid and payroll.
- **Indirect impacts:** Jobs and income in businesses providing goods and services to the campus. For example, vendors who conduct business with IAC in turn buy fuel and other supplies, rent office space, and purchase services from other local providers in support of their day-to-day business operations. This spending creates additional jobs and income in the region (and statewide).
- **Induced impacts:** Jobs and income created as a result of campus employees spending their payroll dollars in the local economy (these are sometimes termed “induced” impacts).

Indirect and induced economic impacts, often described as multiplier effects, are important components of the overall economic impact of the NWC. In general, however, multiplier effects for Alaska are limited, especially for rural areas, as few goods are actually produced in the state.

NWC Campus Spending Impacts

Based on NWC’s direct annual average employment of 28 full-time/part-time individuals in the region, the campus had an indirect and induced impact of about 7 additional jobs within the Nome region and one additional job statewide. The additional payroll associated with this indirect and induced employment totaled about \$223,000 within the region and about \$1.0 million statewide.

NWC’s FY 2008 total direct spending of \$3.1 million within the Nome region resulted in total economic activity of about \$3.4 million. NWC’s statewide spending of \$3.4 million resulted in total economic activity of nearly \$5.0 million in FY 2008.

Table 10
Total Economic Impacts, FY 2008

	Direct	Indirect & Induced	Total
Nome census area			
Employment	28	7	35
Labor income (payroll and benefits)	\$2,031,000	\$223,000	\$2,254,000
Campus spending	1,029,000	113,000	1,142,000
Total spending impact	\$3,060,000	\$336,000	\$3,396,000
Statewide (including Nome census area)			
Employment	30	8	38
Labor income (payroll and benefits)	\$2,260,000	\$1,020,000	\$3,280,000
Campus spending	1,095,000	595,000	1,690,000
Total spending impact	\$3,355,000	\$1,615,000	\$4,970,000

Source: UA Statewide Planning and Budget, UAF College of Rural and Community Development, and McDowell Group analysis.

Community Value of NWC

The value of NWC extends further than its economic contribution to the Seward Peninsula and its communities. The campus is a community asset that improves the quality of life for the area's residents, as well as supporting local economic development through education and training of the local workforce.

To illustrate the qualitative impact of NWC, the study team conducted interviews with a variety of local community leaders, gathering their opinions on NWC's contributions. While the majority of the interviewees mentioned the value of traditional educational opportunities at NWC, many also emphasized the importance of skill-building vocational classes. For example, many of the interviewees mentioned the recently completed driver's education course. This course brought in an instructor to help residents gain their driver's license, which would help them seek employment where a driver's license was required. This course helped employers by providing training for current and potential employees, enhancing the local workforce.

NWC faculty and staff are engaged in daily life in rural Alaska and contribute to their community. Many of them are actively involved in various events in the community, even organizing some events.

Below is a summary of general themes that emerged from the interviews.

CONTINUUM OF EDUCATION

NWC provides a key piece in continuing education in Nome and in the region. As one interviewee put it:

NWC is a leader in the development of post-secondary education in the region. The region has a low number of kids who graduate high school, and a lower number that go on to college. The few that do go rarely stay because they can't handle the lack of community support they had at home. NWC bridges this gap because they are a local campus. They [students] can start at NWC, get a handle on things, and then leave, or they can start and finish their education here.

Another interviewee stated, "[NWC's] most important role is that they're the university for the region. They are the first people students talk to about furthering their education, the first point of contact."

NWC partners with Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC), Kawerak and local school districts, working to collaborate on programs, instructors, funding, facilities, and offering more opportunities to the community. From this collaboration, NWC offers dual credits with Nome Beltz High School, NACTEC and Kawerak, and they have a working relationship with Norton Sound Health Consortium, which helped to create a certified nurses' assistant program. All the interviewees mentioned the dual credit option between various organizations, and how it allowed students to gain experience in both a classroom and a real working environment. One mentioned, "It [dual credits] was really beneficial to the students, as they came out of high school with nine or ten college credits."

IMPROVING STUDENT SUCCESS

Several of the interviewees shared how NWC offered an important avenue for students to get a college degree or training for a job. As one interviewee stated, "They are learning real world skills that they can take

back to their communities and live their own lives. They are getting college credit from NWC, and getting exposed to job opportunities.”

Another interviewee mentioned how one student was able to graduate from high school with 20 college credits, a feat not possible without NWC. He stated, “After graduation, she will be able to either continue college at home, or go to a bigger campus. Either way, she already has a year of college under her belt, which will save her time and money.”

Yet another interviewee stated how several vice presidents of local organizations were able to obtain a master’s degree through NWC and distance learning. “It’s great reading in the paper about people who are obtaining their degree in Nome.” This contributes not only to the quality of students’ lives, but the lives of people in the community and the community’s overall well-being.

Finally, one interviewee mentioned the training of para-professionals, which helps train locals to fill positions as office workers, classroom aids and teachers. “The numbers are small, but for our population, it’s a big thing. We have two to three people who are just a few credits short of graduating. One person received an associate’s degree this year, and we had one or two last year. We are proud of them. We have placed posters about them in the hallway for others to see their accomplishments. It helps them leverage themselves into better positions, into better careers, and is good for us [the community].”

SERVING COMMUNITY NEEDS

NWC is known in the community for its wide range of course offerings. As one interviewee put it, “They provide educational opportunities for a wide variety of topics from gardening classes to four year degrees and master’s in Rural Development.” All interviewees’ mentioned the vocational classes offered by NWC. Many mentioned how NWC classes, such as arctic survival, how to make a kuspuk, fine art classes, driver’s education, basic veterinarian medicine for dog mushers, how to use a GPS, and basic snow machine maintenance, would not normally fit into a more mainstream college course catalogue. Most of the interviewees had participated in some of these classes.

When asked about the vocational and skill-building classes, interviewees stated:

Not for credit, but valuable. People want them, need them, and use them. It’s not like English 101, but something they can use every day.

The Elders Advisory Committee invites NWC to their discussions. They discuss relevant courses in the villages, especially ones with cultural backgrounds. NWC provides information on courses to elders and they give advice on what they think should be done. They are very interested in staying connected with NWC.

NWC is a great resource for the community to take classes in a lot of different areas, not necessarily academic areas, but creative type courses. There is something for everyone.

Most of these classes are not for credit, but it’s what people want to see.

People can take courses ranging from religion to pottery. Winters are sort of long and dark and dreary, anyplace we can go to entertain ourselves and learn at the same time is good. The plant, pottery, photography and water rescue classes are good. The water safety class taught at the local pool by a certified instructor teaches people how to quickly, safely, and properly put on a survival suit. This actually helps people.

SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

NWC contributes not only to the educational aspect of the community, but the staff and faculty are engaged in many community activities as well. One interviewee mentioned, "The staff and faculty are heavily involved in the community, especially the art and music scene." All interviewees mentioned the positive influence they have on the community.

Outside of work, the staff and faculty are musicians, painters, potters and artists who help the community...they are adding culture to the community.

Staff and faculty are involved with civic things in the community, such as contributing to the folk music scene and organizing the Nome Folk Fest.

I think the faculty and staff do a lot. I see them at career fairs and job fairs, even when not working. I know they go and participate. I know they do an orientation with high school students who are preparing to go to school. They provide resources.

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE

NWC plays an important role in improving the quality of life for Seward Peninsula residents. Several interviewees stated that having the NWC improved the cultural well-being of Nome. As one stated, "Having a campus in Nome makes it so that culture has a big presence. People associated with NWC come in and help organize cultural events, allowing Nome to have a greater cultural impact than it might have without NWC."

When asked how they felt NWC contributes to their community, interviewees offered several different perspectives:

The college has a good atmosphere and helps the community.

There are not a lot of jobs here. The fact that NWC is able to hire a number of staff and keep them in the community is great. They are highly educated and highly qualified people. Every job is important in Nome, and we want to keep people working in Nome. We're trying to keep all our people here.

NWC has a library, and their conference room is used by community organizations. We can use their facility for some things. Such as when people get back from traveling, we use their equipment to do a slide show of photos of their travels. It provides a place for the exchange of information, which is nice.

Because of NWC, we're not just a mining community anymore.

NWC has been around a long time, and I've watched NWC evolve from a community college into a college. Various people come and go, but it remains. We are in a real key point in time right now where there is a real good mixture of people and staff and they recognize the importance of NWC.

INTEGRAL COMMUNITY ROLE

Finally, a hypothetical question was asked, "What would the effects be on the community if NWC were no longer available?"

Can't even imagine it. There has always been a university presence here, and I can't even picture the place without it. It would be very depressing for the region as far as education and the economy. We wouldn't have learning centers in villages. There would still be distance delivery, but no one-on-one attention to inspire people to continue. There would be no one to coordinate classes, and help people get set up on computers. People would stop out of frustration with no one there to help. People just wouldn't go to school. There would be less people certified to do anything.

There would be a dramatic reduction in people able to attend courses. Non-traditional students are place-bound, and NWC provides the bridge between the university and the community. For whatever reason, the financial and social burden of attending a campus outside of the community would be hard for people. Less people would be getting educated.

There would be no more professional development, and the loss of a career center. This would affect the capacity of several organizations (for-profits, non-profits, and tribal government). We would not be able to function the way we do now because we would lose so many valuable resources, employees, facilities and training.

If NWC were to leave, we would lose a lot of key people in the faculty and staff. We would lose civic-minded people, some of the movers and shakers in the town.

I don't think we can do very well without having them here. It's a small college. I know students and staff that have graduated high school with college credits. Several vice presidents of local organizations have gotten master's through there. We would lose that.

Nome is 525 miles from Anchorage. People want to learn. People want to improve their skills. We would lose a lot of people who would go out of Nome to improve their skills and education and then not come back. We would have a loss of our own people.

Devastating, I think it would be devastating. We need some presence of a campus in order to make sure the students are helped. It would be devastating, and it would be a bad move for the state.

It would make it more difficult to get coursework, and lack the personal contact with an academic advisor, which would cause some people to discontinue the program. It would be a significant impact on paraprofessionals. UAF is a long ways away, and they don't know our people, and I am not convinced they would receive the same level of service they receive now with NWC.

Alaska Communities of Origin and Student Count Outside Service Area, Fall 2008

10 to 12 students

Anchorage (12), Kotzebue (11)

5 to 9 students

Fairbanks (7), Bethel (5), Dillingham (5), Juneau (5)

2 to 4 students

McGrath, Fort Yukon, Tok, Glennallen, Igiugig, Kasilof, Ketchikan, North Pole, Palmer, Sand Point, Sitka

1 student

Allakaket, Atka, Barrow, Chalkyitsik, Chefornek, Chena Hot Springs, Chignik, Chuathbaluk, Deering, Ekwook, Galena, Haines, Holy Cross, Iliamna, Kaltag, Kenai, Kipnuk, Kodiak, Koliganek, Levelock, Napaskiak, New Stuyahok, Nightmute, Nikolaevsk, Noatak, Northway, Nulato, Saint George Island, Saint Mary's, Saint Paul Island, Seward, Skagway, Saint Michael, Tanacross, Thorne Bay, Togiak, Toksook Bay, Unalaska, Valdez, Wasilla, Wrangell

Source: Data Supplied via UA Information Systems: Banner SI closing extracts, Fall 2008.

Note: this table represents 109 Northwest campus fall 2008 students from Alaska communities outside of the campus service area.