



Research Based Course

September 2006

# ***University of Alaska High School Graduate Survey 2006***

***FINAL REPORT***

***Prepared for:  
University of Alaska***

***Prepared by:***



***Juneau • Anchorage***

***September 2006***

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## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

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This report presents results from a survey of Alaska high school graduates from the class of 2006. The telephone survey, conducted in May and June of 2006, included 301 graduates from urban school districts and 125 graduates from rural school districts. A similar survey was conducted of urban graduates in 1999; several questions were repeated from that survey.

Neither the urban nor the rural samples should be considered representative of graduates statewide. School districts were not selected randomly, but rather based on size, region, and willingness to provide graduate lists.

Following are key findings from the survey.

***High school graduates surveyed gave generally high ratings to the quality of edrB***

***Location was the number one reason cited for choosing the University of Alaska – and the number one reason for deciding against the University.***

The other most common reasons for choosing UA included cost, curriculum/programs, personal reasons, and received scholarship. Additional reasons for

**Among UA-bound graduates, about one in seven said they were influenced by UA scholars.**

UA-bound graduates were asked specifically whether they were influenced in their decision to attend UA by friends or family members who were designated as UA scholars. Among urban respondents, 12 percent said yes; among rural respondents, 19 percent said yes.

**The University of Alaska appears to be doing a good job getting information out to high school graduates; only 4 percent of urban respondents, and no rural respondents, said they received no information about UA.**

The number one source of information on UA among urban graduates was the Internet, mentioned by 36 percent. The number one source among rural graduates was the school counselor, mentioned by 46 percent.

Rural graduates were much less likely to mention University employees when compared to urban graduates (6 compared to 23 percent). They were much more likely to mention their school counselor (46 versus 23 percent).

**Where do you get information about the University of Alaska?  
Top Five Responses**

Base: Those who plan to attend the University of Alaska or another college

	<b>URBAN n=257</b>	<b>RURAL n=98</b>
Internet	36%	41%
School counselor	23	46
Mailings/newsletters	21	20
University employees	23	6

# ***INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY***

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## **Introduction**

The University of Alaska contracted with the McDowell Group, Inc. to conduct a survey of 2006 high school graduates in Alaska. The telephone survey included

## OPINION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

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***Nine out of ten graduates surveyed rated the quality of education at the University of Alaska as good or very good. Less than 1 percent rated it poor or very poor.***

Fairbanks graduates tended to rate the University of Alaska higher than Anchorage graduates (91 versus 80 percent good or very good).

Graduates planning to attend UA tended to rate the quality of education at UA higher than other respondents. Among UA-bound respondents, 41 percent rated the quality as very good, compared to 26 percent among graduates heading to other schools, and 31 percent of respondents not pursuing further education.

Compared to the 1999 survey, twice as many urban high school graduates rated the quality of education at the University as “very good” (33 versus 17 percent).

**Based on what you’ve heard, would you describe the quality of education available at the University of Alaska as...**





**Among three statements describing the University, the most popular among surveyed graduates was “a very good school that provides a high-quality education.”**

Slightly fewer respondents chose “an okay school but not as good as most schools down south.” Not one respondent chose “not a good school.”

Fairbanks graduates were more likely to choose the most positive statement (66 percent, versus 51 percent of Juneau and 50 percent of Anchorage students).

UA-bound graduates were more likely to agree with the most positive statement, with 65 percent agreeing, compared to 46 percent of graduates going to other colleges and 57 percent of graduates not pursuing further education.

Urban graduates in 2006 were much more likely than in 1999 to choose the more positive statement to describe the University (56 versus 38 percent).

**Please tell me which of the following statements, in your opinion, best describes the University of Alaska.**

<b>TOTAL</b> n=426	<b>URBAN</b> n=301	<b>Anchorage</b> n=100	<b>Fairbanks</b> n=101	<b>Juneau</b> n=100	<b>RURAL</b> n=125
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## POST-GRADUATE PLANS

**Nearly nine out of ten high school graduates surveyed say they are planning on attending college or vocational school this fall or within the next year.**

Urban students are slightly more likely than rural students to be pursuing further education in the year after graduating (88 versus 80 percent).

Among those not pursuing further education, about half had considered attending the University of Alaska.

### Are you planning on attending college or vocational school this fall or within the next year?

	TOTAL n=426	URBAN n=301	Anchorage n=100	Fairbanks n=101	Juneau n=100	RURAL n=125
Yes	86%	88%	92%	89%	84%	80%
No	10	8	7	7	9	15
Undecided	4	4	1	4	7	5

### Did you consider attending the University of Alaska?

Base: Those who are not attending college or vocational school or are undecided

	TOTAL n=60	URBAN n=35	RURAL n=25
Yes	48%	51%	44%
No	48	43	56
Refused	3	6	-

**Among graduates who are not pursuing further education, the most common reasons were “have a job,” “cost,” and “work first.”**

Urban respondents were much more likely than rural respondents to cite having a job (26 versus 4 percent). Rural respondents were more likely to cite cost (24 versus 11 percent).

### What is the main reason you are not seeking (undecided about) more education or training?

Base: Those who are not attending college or vocational school or are undecided

	TOTAL n=60	URBAN n=35	RURAL n=25
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**Three-quarters of college-bound graduates surveyed had decided on a field of study. The most popular fields mentioned were medicine/health care, business/finance, and engineering.**

The second table below shows fields mentioned by six or more respondents. A complete list can be found in the Appendix.

### Have you decided on a field of study?

Base: Those who plan to attend the University of Alaska or another college

	TOTAL n=355	URBAN n=257	Anchorage n=85	Fairbanks n=88	Juneau n=84	RURAL n=98
Yes	75%	73%	74%	78%	67%	80%
No	24	26	25	20	32	19
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	1

### Which field of study? (Most popular)

Base: Decided on a field of study

	Number of Mentions (Out of 264)
Medicine/health care*	28
Business/finance	28
Engineering	20
Education	16
Nursing	16
Music/arts/theater	15
Biology	13
Computer technology	11
Automotive	10
Accounting	7
English	7
Culinary arts	6
Psychology	6

\* Includes pre-med, medical, dentistry, neuroscience, physical therapy, and radiology.

***Nearly half of college-bound graduates surveyed said they plan on making Alaska their home after college, while one-third don't know.***

## ***CHOOSING THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA***

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***Just over half of college-bound graduates surveyed said they were planning on attending the University of Alaska.***

College-bound graduates in Fairbanks were most likely to plan on attending the University of Alaska (66 percent). This compares to 49 percent in Juneau and 51 percent in Anchorage.

Among urban UA-bound graduates, the vast majority plan to attend the campus closest to their home – 89 percent in Anchorage plan to attend the Anchorage campus, 86 percent for Fairbanks, and 90 percent for Juneau.

The second table below compares 1999 survey results to 2006, showing the percentage of respondents in each community planning to attend the nearest campus. The percentage of respondents in Fairbanks planning to attend the

***Location was by far the most important reason for attending the University, mentioned as the main reason by half of respondents. Cost was the number two reason, mentioned by 22 percent.***

Respondents were also asked if there were any additional reasons for choosing UA. The second table below shows these responses combined with the responses to the first question. Location and cost are again the major reasons, followed by

**One out of seven UA-bound graduates said they were influenced in their decision by friends or family members who were designated as UA Scholars.**

Only 2 percent of respondents answered “don’t know” – implying a high level of awareness of the program.

**In your decision to attend the University of Alaska, were you influenced by friends or family members who were designated as UA Scholars?**

Base: Those who will be attending the University of Alaska

	TOTAL n=204	URBAN n=147	Anchorage n=47	Fairbanks n=59	Juneau n=41	RURAL n=57
Yes	14%	12%	11%	10%	15%	19%
No	83	88	89	88	85	70
Don't know	2	1	-	2	-	7
Refused	1	-	-	-	-	4

**One out of ten UA-bound graduates said their family used the UA College Savings Plan. One out of five graduates were not sure.**

Rural respondents were more likely to say that their family used the UA College Savings Plan (14 versus 8 percent).

**Did your family use the UA College Savings Plan?**

Base: Those who will be attending the University of Alaska

	TOTAL n=204	URBAN n=147	Anchorage n=47	Fairbanks n=59	Juneau n=41	RURAL n=57
Yes	10%	8%	6%	8%	10%	14%
No	70	71	79	69	63	67
Don't know	19	20	15	20	27	16
Refused	1	1	-	2	-	4

## **STAYING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA**

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*Two-thirds of UA-bound graduates surveyed said they planned on earning a degree from the University.*

**Do you plan on earning a degree from the University of Alaska?**

Base: Those who will be attending the University of Alaska







***The most common reason for not attending the University of Alaska was location, mentioned by 43 percent of respondents.***

## ***THE COLLEGE SELECTION PROCESS***

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***About half of college-bound graduates surveyed said they had help in deciding which university to attend. Respondents most commonly named their parents as those who helped in their decision.***

Rural students were more likely to say they had help in deciding which university to attend (54 versus 45 percent of urban respondents).

UA-bound respondents were less likely to have had help in deciding – 37 percent, compared to 62 percent of respondents heading elsewhere for college.

Parents were by far the most commonly-mentioned “helpers,” followed by school counselors, friends/peers, and other relatives.

The biggest difference between the urban and rural sampl052(r)-18(b)6.20pe-bpeuf an9.2(e)ri

**Did you have help in deciding which university to attend?  
Urban Respondents, 1999 versus 2006**

	1999 Urban Only	2006 Urban Only
Had help in deciding which university to attend	48%	45%
<b><i>Who helped you decide? (Top 5)</i></b>		
Parents	72	66
School counselors	25	21
Teachers	9	9
Friends	9	20
Other relatives	9	11

***Over half of college-bound graduates said their financial aid package was either very important or important in deciding where to attend college.***

One out of five respondents said their financial aid package was unimportant. A similar number did not receive a financial aid package.

Juneau graduates were the most likely to say their financial aid package was not important or not at all important (35 percent).

**How important was your financial aid package in deciding where to attend college?**

Base: Those who plan to attend the University of Alaska or another college

	TOTAL n=355	URBAN n=257	Anchorage n=85	Fairbanks n=88	Juneau n=84	RURAL n=98
Very important	27%	28%	33%	28%	21%	24%
Important	27	23	24	24	23	37
Not important	18	23	18	19	31	5
Not at all important	4	4	4	3	4	6
Did not receive financial aid	21	20	19	24	17	22
Don't know	4	3	4	1	5	5

# UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA OUTREACH

***The Internet was the number one source for information on University of Alaska among college-bound graduates.***

Rural students were much more likely to mention their school counselor when compared to urban students (46 versus 23 percent). They were much less likely to mention University employees (6 versus 23 percent) and University students (4 versus 17 percent).

Anchorage students were more likely than other students to mention their school counselor (32 percent). Juneau students were less likely to mention the Internet (26 percent).

Only 3 percent of college-bound respondents said they did not get information about the University of Alaska.

**Where do you get information about the University of Alaska?**

Base: Those who plan to attend the University of Alaska or another college

	TOTAL n=355	URBAN n=257	Anchorage n=85	Fairbanks n=88	Juneau n=84	RURAL n=98
Internet	37%	36%	40%	41%	26%	41%
School counselor	30	23	32	20	18	46
Mailings/newsletters	21	21	14	28	21	20
University employees	19	23	21	24	25	6
Word of mouth	14	15	13	16	17	11
University students	13	17	14	14	23	4
College fair	5	6	4	5	11	1

**Four out of ten college-bound graduates surveyed said they requested information from the University of Alaska.**

Although UA-bound respondents were more likely to have requested information from UA (46 percent), a significant portion of respondents heading to other colleges requested information from UA (32 percent).

Among respondents who had requested information, 85 percent felt they received enough information.

**Did you request information from the University of Alaska?**

Base: Those who plan to attend the University of Alaska or another college

	<b>TOTAL n=355</b>	<b>URBAN n=257</b>	<b>Anchorage n=85</b>	<b>Fairbanks n=88</b>	<b>Juneau n=84</b>	<b>RURAL n=98</b>
Yes	40%	41%	44%	40%	39%	38%
No	59	58	56	57	61	62
Don't Know	1	1	-	3	-	-

**Do you feel you received enough information about the University of Alaska?**

Base: Those who requested information from the University of Alaska

# SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION

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## Sample Distribution by School District

	Number Surveyed
<b>Urban</b>	
Anchorage	100
Fairbanks	101
Juneau	100
Kodiak	26
North Slope	22
Bering Strait	16
Northwest Arctic	13
Lower Yukon	13
Valdez	8
Petersburg	6





University of Nebraska Lincoln  
University of Nebraska Lincoln  
University of Oregon  
UTI Sacramento  
Western Washington  
William Woods Missouri  
Williams College  
Yale

**Juneau**

AVTEC in Seward  
Brigham Young  
Brigham Young  
Brown  
Calvary Chapel Bible School  
Central Washington  
Central Washington  
Central Washington  
Cordon Blue of San Francisco  
Eastern Washington  
Fort Lewis  
Gene Juarez  
Haskell Indian Nations University  
IBEW Trade School  
Johnson Wales University  
Lewis and Clark  
Montana Tech.  
Northern Arizona University  
Orange Coast College  
Pacific University of Oregon  
Penn State  
Pima Community College Arizona  
Pt. Loma Nazarene University  
Sonoma University  
Tufts University  
Universal Technical Institute  
University of Idaho  
University of Idaho  
University of Idaho  
University of Idaho  
University of Montana  
University of Oregon  
University of Oregon  
UTI Phoenix  
Vassar  
Washington State Pullman  
Whatcom Community College Washington  
Xavier of Ohio

**Fairbanks**

Adam State Colorado  
AVTEC in Seward  
Boise State  
Brigham Young University  
Brigham Young University  
College of the Ozarks  
Dartmouth  
Kansas State  
Letourneau University

Lewis and Clark  
Montana State  
Montana State  
Northern Arizona  
Northern Colorado University  
Northern Michigan University  
Nursing  
Portland State  
Santa Barbara  
Seattle Film Institute  
U.S. Naval Academy  
University of Nevada  
University of Oregon  
University of San Diego  
University of West Florida  
Valley City State North Dakota  
Washington State  
West Hills Community College California  
Willamette

**Rural**

ATS - Accounting in Kotzebue  
AVTEC in Seward  
AVTEC in Seward  
AVTEC in Seward  
AVTEC in Seward  
AVTEC in Seward  
AVTEC in Seward  
Azvza Pacific California  
Boise State Unviersity  
BYU - Provo  
Central Washington  
Chapman  
Dartmouth  
Devry  
Eastern Arizona College  
Humbolt State University  
Interior Design School of Oxford, England  
Job Corps Palmer  
Job Corps Palmer  
Job Corps Seward  
Kodiak Community College  
Kodiak Community College  
Le Cordon Blu Florida  
Montana State  
Northwest University Washington State  
Southern Oregon  
Truckee Meadows Community College  
Nevada  
University of Las Vegas Nevada  
University of North Dakota  
Washington and Lee University Virginia  
Washington State Pullman  
Western Oregon University  
Western Washington  
Winfield College

**Which field of study?**

**Anchorage**

Architecture

Art

Automotive

Nursing  
Physical Education  
Political Science  
Psychology  
Psychology  
Psychology  
Radiology/Physical Therapy  
Social Studies  
Teaching/nursing  
Theater  
Visual Communications  
Web Development  
Welding  
Welding Program  
**Juneau**  
Accounting  
Accounting  
Accounting  
Art  
Auto Mechanic  
Auto Tech.  
Auto/Diesel  
Automotive Diesel Mechanic  
Beautician  
Biological Sciences  
Biology  
Biology  
Business  
Business Administration  
Business Management  
Civil Engineering  
Computer Science  
Culinary  
Culinary Arts  
Dentistry  
Early Childhood Education  
Early Childhood Education  
Electrician  
Electrician  
Elementary Education  
English  
English Teacher  
English/Photography  
Equine Science  
Forensic Science  
Health Science  
History  
International Affairs  
Journalism  
Liberal Arts  
Medical  
Medical  
Medical Tech.  
Medicine  
Molecular Biology & Bio-Chemistry  
Music  
Music Education

Music Performance  
Nursing  
Nursing  
Nursing  
Psychology  
Radiology  
Radiology

Film Production  
Film Studies  
Fire Science  
Health and Safety of Environmental Awareness  
Human Services  
Industrial Electricity  
International Business and Public Relations  
Journalism  
Mathematics  
Mechanical Engineering  
Medical  
Music  
Neuroscience  
Nursing  
Nursing  
Nursing  
Physical Education  
Physical Therapy  
Physics  
Physiology  
Pre-Med  
Pre-Med  
Pre-Med  
Psychology  
Psychology  
Radiology  
Radiology Tech.  
Sport Science  
Teacher  
**Rural**  
Accounting  
Accounting  
Accounting, Business Management  
Accounting, Business Management and Computer  
Field  
Air Frame and Power Plant  
Art  
Automotive Tech  
Biology  
Business  
Business  
Business  
Business  
Business  
Business Admin - Finance  
Business Administration  
Business Administration and Management  
Business Administration or Pre-Law  
Business and Finance  
Business Law or Mangement  
Business Management  
Carpentry, Electrician  
Carpentry, Heavy Equipment  
Certification in Welding  
Certified NA  
Child Development  
Commercial Aviation

Computer Information Programming  
Computer Network Management  
Computer Sciences  
Computer Technology  
Criminal Justice  
Criminal Justice  
Culinary Arts  
Culinary Arts  
Culinary Arts  
Culinary Arts  
Education Teacher  
Electrical and Mechanical Engineering  
Elementary Education  
Engineering  
Engineering  
Engineering  
Engineering or Optometry  
Fashion Design  
Film Making  
Firefighting or Electrical Power Generation  
Heavy Equipment Mechanic  
History  
Mechanical engineering  
Medical Pediatrics  
Medicine  
Music Management  
Nursing  
Nursing  
Nursing  
Nursing  
Nursing  
Nutritionist  
Optometry  
Political Science  
Political Science  
Prematernal Nursing  
Pre-Med  
Pre-Med  
Social Work  
Teaching  
Teaching, Business  
Theater  
Youth Ministry

**What was the main reason you decided to attend the University of Alaska?**

**Anchorage**

To further my education  
My family moved here  
I love Alaska  
It was more simple

**Juneau**

Edg





# ***SURVEY INSTRUMENT***

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(See attached)

## 2006 University of Alaska High School Graduate Survey FINAL3

PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer Name \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ calling from the McDowell Group in Juneau. We're gathering opinions from Alaska's 2006 high school graduates. I'd like to ask you a few questions...

**1. First, are you planning on attending college or vocational school this fall or within the next year?**

- |                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 1 Yes (SKIP TO Q4) | 3 Undecided  |
| 2 No               | 4 Refu Other |

- |                     |               |            |
|---------------------|---------------|------------|
| 05 Personal reasons | 10 Don't know | 11 Refused |
|---------------------|---------------|------------|

**3. Did you consider attending the University of Alaska?**

- |       |      |           |
|-------|------|-----------|
| 1 Yes | 2 No | 3 Refused |
|-------|------|-----------|

**SKIP TO Q17**

**4. Will you be attending the University of Alaska?**

- |                     |  |                    |             |          |               |
|---------------------|--|--------------------|-------------|----------|---------------|
| 1 Yes               | <b>4a. Which campus?</b>                                     | 1 Fairbanks        | 2 Anchorage | 3 Juneau | 4 Other _____ |
| 2 No                | <b>4b. Can you tell me which school you'll be attending?</b> | _____ 1 Don't know |             |          |               |
| <b>(SKIP TO Q9)</b> |  |                    |             |          |               |
| 3 Don't know        | <b>(SKIP TO Q17)</b>   |                    |             |          |               |
| 4 Refused           | <b>(SKIP TO Q17)</b>   |                    |             |          |               |

***ATTENDING UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA***

**5. What was the main reason you decided to attend the University of Alaska?**

*DO NOT PROMPT, choose only one*

- |                                      |                                     |               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 01 Location                          | 08 Received scholarship             | 14 Don't know |
| 02 Cost                              | 09 Received UA Scholars Award       | 15 Refused    |
| 03 Curriculum/programs               | 10 ACT/College savings plan account |               |
| 04 Good school/good reputation       | 11 Tuition waiver                   |               |
| 05 Extracurricular opportunities     | 12 Personal reasons                 |               |
| 06 No general admission requirements | 13 Other _____                      |               |
| 07 Parents wanted me to attend       |                                     |               |

**5a. Were there any other reasons you decided to attend the University of Alaska?**

*DO NOT PROMPT, multiple responses allowed*

- |                                      |                                     |               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 01 Location                          | 08 Received scholarship             | 15 Don't know |
| 02 Cost                              | 09 Received UA Scholars Award       | 16 Refused    |
| 03 Curriculum/programs               | 10 ACT/College savings plan account |               |
| 04 Good school/good reputation       | 11 Tuition waiver                   |               |
| 05 Extracurricular opportunities     | 12 Personal reasons                 |               |
| 06 No general admission requirements | 13 <b>None</b>                      |               |
| 07 Parents wanted me to attend       | 14 Other _____                      |               |

**6.**

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**ATTENDING ANOTHER COLLEGE**

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1 Yes            2 No            3 Don't know            4 Refused

- \_\_\_\_\_
- |    |  |    |  |
|----|--|----|--|
| 01 | Location/outside Alaska                    | 08 | Sports/activities not available at UA        |
| 02 | Program not available at UA                | 09 | Better sports/activities available elsewhere |
| 03 | Better program elsewhere                   | 10 | Personal reasons                             |
| 04 | Parents wanted me to attend another school | 11 | Other _____                                  |
| 05 | Received scholarship                       | 12 | Don't know                                   |
| 06 | Reputation of school (UA)                  | 13 | Refused                                      |
| 07 | Quality of school (UA)                     |    |  |

- \_\_\_\_\_
- |    |  |    |  |
|----|--|----|--|
| 01 | Location/outside Alaska                    | 08 | Sports/activities not available at UA        |
| 02 | Program not available at UA                | 09 | Better sports/activities available elsewhere |
| 03 | Better program elsewhere                   | 10 | Personal reasons                             |
| 04 | Parents wanted me to attend another school | 11 |  |
| 05 | Received scholarship                       | 12 | Other _____                                  |
| 06 | Reputation of school (UA)                  | 13 | Don't know                                   |
| 07 | Quality of school (UA)                     | 14 | Refused                                      |

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**ATTENDING UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA OR ANOTHER COLLEGE**

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**17. Based on what you've heard, would you describe the quality of education available at the University of Alaska as... *Read 1-5***

- |   |                       |   |           |   |            |
|---|-----------------------|---|-----------|---|------------|
| 1 | Very good             | 4 | Poor      | 6 | Don't know |
| 2 | Good                  | 5 | Very poor | 7 | Refused    |
| 3 | Neither good nor poor |   |           |   |            |

**18. Please tell me which of the following statements, in your opinion, best describes the University of Alaska... *Read 1-3***

1