

# Outreach Builds Awareness and Participation: Giving Alaska's Students New College Opportunities



## Active, Consistent Outreach Introduces CLEP® to the Anchorage Community

Francine Feero, testing manager for the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA), makes CLEP® “top of mind” in her community through consistent and creative outreach. From in-class presentations for local high school students, work with the local organizations to exhibits at local job fairs, and participation in community workshops, Feero promotes the services and opportunities available to UAA students and the community at large. She notes, “We promote CLEP to students to help them save money, and we also promote this opportunity to people who speak second languages, so they have an opportunity to earn credit for their language proficiency.”

Additional information about UAA's testing center and its program is available at [www.uaa.alaska.edu/advising-testing/testing-and-assessment/clep.cfm](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/advising-testing/testing-and-assessment/clep.cfm)

## University of Alaska Anchorage: A Profile

The University of Alaska Anchorage is the state's largest postsecondary institution and includes six teaching units at its Anchorage campus, including the colleges of Education, Health and Social Welfare, Arts and Sciences, Business and Public Policy, and the Community and Technical Colleges, along with the School of Engineering. UAA's Anchorage campus serves more than 49,000 students and offers programs that culminate in associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees, as well as vocational and professional certificates in more than 150 major study areas. The university's Advising and Testing Center offers a comprehensive range of services, including CLEP and other exams for credit.

## On-Campus Outreach: A Critical Component for Success

UAA's Advising and Testing Center team consistently promotes the opportunity to earn credit for prior knowledge on campus as well. The team keeps its on-campus distribution center stocked with the most recent College Board CLEP informational brochures and participates in informational events and workshops at the UAA Student Union, so students have the opportunity to learn about CLEP exams and can meet the representatives from the Advising and Testing Center. Feero notes that keeping faculty members up to date about CLEP is critical because they can often disseminate the information with and for students who may not have been aware of the program previously.

## Persistence and Commitment: Two Observable Characteristics of Students Who Take CLEP Exams

Although Feero does not have statistical data about UAA's CLEP-taking students, she noted that in her more than 10 years of work at the Advising and Testing Center, she's observed that "... people who take tests to get credit for it are more focused and are success driven. You won't find someone taking a CLEP exam that is not going to follow through and finish a degree. These people are here because they want to get a degree as soon as possible, and they're going to follow through with it. We have students that take 10–12 CLEP exams to finish their degree really quickly."

## Outreach Makes a Personal Impact

When asked about CLEP success stories, Feero recalled a student who came from a family in which college was simply not an option. She met one of the family's daughters and took time to encourage her to save the money required to take a CLEP exam in Spanish. The young woman took Feero's advice and earned 16 credits for prior knowledge, which enabled her to continue her education and enroll at UAA. That initial outreach motivated a student to take the next steps and now this first-generation student is a junior at UAA and on track to earn her college degree.

## CLEP at UAA by the Numbers

- Between 2009 and 2013, 141 students took more than one CLEP exam.
- The average number of CLEP credits earned was seven.
- Students who took CLEP exams had, on average, higher GPAs than the overall student population.

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## UAA Best Practices at a Glance

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- Work with local high schools to introduce opportunities through the CLEP exam program
- Play CLEP promotional videos on a wall-mounted 50-inch HDTV posted in the testing center lobby
- Develop a marketing and outreach program that reaches into the community, including job fairs, organizations such as Boys & Girls Clubs, and military bases
- Keep your own university community informed and aware of CLEP exams through brochure kiosks, presentations at career events, and direct faculty outreach

For more information, visit [clep.collegeboard.org](http://clep.collegeboard.org).