

Alaska Native Language Program Outcomes Assessment Report

BA in Inupiaq Eskimo and Yup'ik Eskimo – May 13, 2013

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Mission Statement: The Alaska Native Language Program endeavors to teach Alaska Native Languages, train quality instructors of Native language and culture, and work with organizations around the state to support excellence in Native language programs at all levels. ANLP supports the maintenance and transmission of Alaska Native languages through language teaching, teacher education, and research.

I. Student outcome goals and objectives of the program

Outcome goals and objectives are taken from the Outcomes Assessment plan currently being filed with the Provost.

1. Prepare students to communicate in both written and oral Eskimo (Inupiaq or Yup'ik).
2. Familiarize students with the literature in the language of study.
3. Teach students to understand and utilize Eskimo grammar.

II. Assessment Criteria and Procedures

Assessment criteria and procedures are taken from the revised program Outcomes Assessment plan.

1. Completion of major courses, including a capstone course (ESK 415 for Yup'ik, ESK 417 for Inupiaq), which incorporates what they have learned in previous courses.
2. Completion of upper division course work (essays, tests, and for Yup'ik students, journals) and final presentations, open to attendance by other faculty and students.
3. Survey of majors assesses student expectations of the program, in terms of their personal goals and areas in which they expect to gain knowledge and expertise.

III. Information collected

1. Faculty committee annual review of student work and discussion of classes
2. Faculty attendance at senior capstone presentations (to begin next year) and other class presentations.
3. Student surveys to be filled out by majors.

IV. Analysis of Academic year 2011-2012

Faculty review of student work

Three program faculty met on May 9, 2013 to review student work and discuss the program. At this point there is only one Inupiaq instructor and one Yup'ik instructor teaching in the Eskimo B.A. program.

Yup'ik:

1. Students fill out chapter test rubrics at the end of each chapter study, and the committee looked at the Chapter 13 rubrics, reading about students' evaluation of their own work and progress in the class. The instructor reported on group reciprocal teaching activities conducted in class.
2. Faculty attended student presentations at end of Spring semester for ESK 202 and 301 and filled out evaluation rubrics.
3. Student surveys: none were turned in for Yup'ik, and there is one graduate this year with a B.A. in Yup'ik Eskimo.

Results by Goal:

“Ability to speak Yupik or Inupiaq at a high proficiency level”—Based on student oral presentations, faculty conclude that the top students in the program are reaching the desired level of proficiency, some in only 2-3 years. Students achieving high proficiency include some who start the program knowing no Yup'ik as well as students who start out as passive speakers (understanders who do not speak Yup'ik). Student journals talk about their progress and their needs in oral language learning. Knowledge of spoken Yup'ik will be improved in the proposed major revision, which plans to include upper division courses taught completely in Yup'ik (see Summary below).

“Knowledge of written language” – Student work demonstrates a good knowledge of the written language. Weekly written assignments in Yup'ik are reviewed and corrected and further students' abilities to write the language.

“Familiarity with Eskimo literature”— This area needs to be addressed and will be handled by a new course in the revised Yup'ik major (see Summary below).

“Understanding of Eskimo grammar”— Student exams show good understanding of Yup'ik grammar on the part of most students. Students work with the *Practical Grammar of Yup'ik* and learn grammar through writing and correction, using the grammar text as a reference. Oral presentations and written work demonstrate varied grammatical constructions.

Inupiaq:

1. One student survey was reviewed from a graduating major, who plans to teach high school and would like to be able to teach Inupiaq. Inupiaq has few majors, since most students take the classes to satisfy the Core requirement and do not complete the major. This student plans to teach high school English and would also like to be qualified to teach Inupiaq, as well as learn to speak the language to pass it on to her children. She has gained some language and cultural knowledge.
2. The Inupiaq instructor discussed student requests and needs, based in part on student survey: Students desire more conversation practice, more spoken Inupiaq, a point also reflected in student survey responses over several years.

3. Students made final presentations in ESK 417 in Spring, 2012, capstone class for majors, discussing their work on translation and transcription of Inupiaq video tapes from North Slope Elders Conferences.

Results by Goal:

“Ability to speak Yupik or Inupiaq at a high proficiency level”--A section of ESK 115, Conversational Inupiaq, will be offered to address need for more oral language. Two person conversations in class have already begun to address this same need.

“Knowledge of written language” – Written student assignments from ESK 417 (taught this year as ESK 497) demonstrate good knowledge of written Inupiaq, with spelling corrections made by instructor.

“Familiarity with Eskimo literature”— Most Inupiaq literature was originally oral, and was transcribed, translated, and published. Students are undertaking these tasks in the senior capstone course.

“Understanding of Eskimo grammar”— Students have worked their way through the First and Second Year Inupiaq Grammars by the time they graduate, which should give them a good command of the grammar.

Summary and Plans to further address desired outcomes:

Yup’ik – Students have a good knowledge of grammar and written Yup’ik. Oral language can be strengthened as can familiarity with Yup’ik literature. During the past academic year, discussions of a major revision in the Yup’ik Eskimo B.A. program have been underway and will result in a merger of the Fairbanks degree program with the Yup’ik Language and Culture B.A. taught at UAF’s Kuskokwim Campus. The goal is to design a program that looks more like other language degrees, including oral language, grammar, culture, and literature. The program revision was submitted this academic year, and will address the goals stated in the SLOA plan. It is hoped the new degree will increase the number of Yup’ik majors by offering a program that attracts more students because it corresponds to student expectations.

Inupiaq – There are few majors in Inupiaq and most students take just one year of the language to satisfy the Core requirement. This situation is similar for some other languages at UAF. The few students who take the senior capstone course have made good progress in grammar and written Inupiaq. More oral language experience is desirable and this goal continues from last year. It will possibly be addressed by offering a conversation course (ESK 115 or 116) again next year. In addition, senior final presentations will be planned that can be attended and evaluated by program faculty. There are no plans at this time to revise the major, although that possibility may be considered once the new Yup’ik B.A. is in place. The instructor is improving his language teaching skills, and this process is ongoing, especially for oral language.