

Outcomes Assessment Implementation Summary

School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences

Program: B.S. Geography

	Academic Year		
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Assessment information collected	<p>1) Faculty carried out a complete review of the Geography B.S. degree beginning in Spring 2006, and continuing through the 2007-2008 academic year. This included consultation with faculty at UAA and UAS to assess the potential for a statewide geography program.</p>	<p>1) Major revisions to the B.S. took effect. Because of revisions to both the program and the content & structure of individual courses, conventional outcomes information was not consistently collected.</p> <p>2) Informal feedback from students on the program and course changes was extremely positive.</p> <p>3) The number of Geography B.S. majors increased dramatically from approximately 10 in 07/08 to approximately 30 by May 2009.</p> <p>4) Most of the new B.S. majors signed-up for one of the two new B.S. options.</p>	<p>1) Evaluate student writing skills, oral presentation skills, and geographical analysis skills based on evaluations of written and oral work selected both from early coursework and from later upper-division courses, especially Senior Seminar (GEOG 490).</p> <p>3) Four Geography B.S. majors graduated in the 08/09 academic year, and several new majors signed-up, resulting in a net increase of five B.S. majors by May 2010.</p> <p>4) Dean administers exit interview with graduating students.</p> <p>5) Began an informal survey of alumni to assess graduates' success in finding degree-related employment or placement in relevant graduate programs.</p>

B.S. Geography

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Conclusions drawn from the information collected above	<p>1) The UAF Geography faculty concluded that the Geography B.S. was in need of major revision to better prepare students to meet the needs of the contemporary job market.</p> <p>2) Faculty at UAF, UAA, and UAS concluded that combining geography expertise and resources at UAF, UAA, and UAS could create a statewide geography and environmental studies program that would be stronger, and would better serve students, than any of the individual campus programs standing alone.</p>	<p>1) The revised B.S. is a definite improvement, is moving the program in a positive direction, and is attracting new and higher-quality majors.</p> <p>2) The new B.S. options in "Landscape Analysis and Climate Change," and "Geographic Information Science and Technology" clearly fill a need for students.</p> <p>3) The relatively low increase in new majors in the original B.S. option, "Environmental Studies," indicates that this option needs improvement.</p> <p>4) The new and revised B.S. options are still in their shakedown cruise, and still need refinement.</p> <p>5) Course offering frequency and sequencing need to be adjusted to meet changing student demand.</p>	<p>1) Almost all students show improvement in their writing, oral, and geographical analysis skills between their early courses and the later courses in their program. However, the improvement is uneven, contingent partly on variability in individual students' ability and motivation, but also on the foundation skills that they have when they enter the program, which are extremely variable.</p> <p>1) The revised B.S. and new B.S. options continue to attract more and higher-quality majors than their predecessor.</p>

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Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above	<p>1) The UAF geography B.S. was completely revised in coordination with UAA and UAS. New courses were created, existing courses were revised and updated, and a set of "Foundation" courses, required of every geography major, was agreed-upon by faculty at the three campuses.</p> <p>2) Two new options were added within the Geography B.S.: "Landscape Analysis and Climate Change," and "Geographic Information Science and Technology." These options were created to meet growing interest among students in these areas, and to help graduates take advantage of present and future job growth in these fields. The curricular changes took effect Fall 2008.</p>	<p>1) Minor changes were made to the B.S. curriculum to accommodate increased enrollments, and to further refine the revised degree.</p> <p>2) Faculty began a review of the "Environmental Studies" option.</p>	<p>1) Encourage faculty to incorporate writing, speaking, and analysis exercises in both lower and upper division courses, so that students deficient in these skills have every opportunity to improve.</p> <p>2) Build early evaluations of foundation skills into courses to identify as early as possible students who will need additional help, or who are not well-enough prepared to succeed in a given course.</p> <p>3) UAF and UAS geography faculty are coordinating on a revision of the "Environmental Studies" option within the Geography B.S. degree to make it more academically rigorous, and to make it more relevant to current and developing environmental issues.</p>