

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary

Alaska Native Studies, BA *College of Rural and Community Development* **AY 2016/17 and 2017/18**

Submitted by: Jennifer L.L. Carroll
Contact Information: x5405, jlcarroll@alaska.edu
Date: August 25, 2018

1. Assessment information collected

- A. Impressionistic Histories: Impressionistic Histories were collected for students in all ANS Core courses for AY 2016/2017 and AY 2017/2018. The form collects scores and comments on writing skills, oral skills, cultural communication/human relations skills, and critical thinking abilities.
- B. Alaska Native Studies Senior Thesis: Currently, ANS students take RD 475 Rural Development Senior Project instead of ANS 478 Senior Thesis because there are not enough students to offer the class. A committee of two to three faculty reviewed the senior projects and papers produced in RD 475 Rural Development Senior Project, including ANS students enrolled in the course, and assessed them using a common rubric.
- C. Post Graduate employment survey: Not collected.

2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above

- A. Impressionistic Histories: Impressionistic History forms for AY 2016/2017 and AY 2017/2018 were modified to include descriptions for each score in each category to encourage more standardized reporting, add an "N/A" option, and provide a menu of comments based on common issues and concerns.

Twenty-eight Impressionistic Histories were submitted by faculty teaching ANS Core courses for 17 individual students. Scores: 1 – poorest, 2 – poor, 3 – average, 4 – better, 5 – best, 6 – N/A (removed from calculations).

Academic Year		Writing Skills	Oral Skills	Cultural Communications/Human Relations Skills	Quality of Work	Critical Thinking Abilities
AY 2015/2016	Average across all students assessed	3.7	3.9	4.2	3.8	4.2
AY 2016/2017	n*=17	3.8	3.9	4.4	NA	4
AY 2017/2018	n=11	4.1	4.2	4.6	NA	4.6

* The number of assessments done. May include multiple assessments of the same student.

Alaska Native Studies, BA

All students evaluated had an overall average score of 3 (average) or better. Fifty-three percent of students evaluated had an overall average score of 4 (better) or better.

Discussion:

- Consistency: Although numbers of ANS students are small, it appears that there is consistency across classes and instructors for students who have taken multiple classes (3 or more) over the two year period, scores across classes and instructors are mostly consistent.
- Student skills: most students are consistent across the skill sets assessed, but a few students excel in some skills more than others.
- Student growth: there is no clear trend in student growth. This may be a result of not enough time/data for tracking, the small number of students, or a faulty assessment tool. Despite the more specific definitions, it is possible that faculty are evaluating students based on “grade level” instead of skill development. However, given the wildly divergent skill students come to the program with, it is common to have a student taking a lower level class with upper level skills.
- Ease of assessment: the Impressionistic History form and Google forms can be difficult to deal with. For this report, for example, the data from fall 2016 was missing from some automatically generated spreadsheets and had to be obtained and manipulated through more labor intensive means.

- B. Alaska Native Studies Senior Thesis: As noted above, ANS students currently take RD 475 Senior Project in lieu of ANS 478 Senior Thesis. RD 475 has a thesis option. Nine spring 2017 senior projects/thesis were assessed by a group of two faculty. Two students were Alaska Native Studies students. There were no ANS students taking RD 475 Spring 2018. Due to the small number of students aggregate information is not provided. Both ANS students scored acceptable or better on their senior theses.

Discussion: With the small number of ANS majors evaluated it is difficult to identify any trends. Below are some thoughts on writing quality and how the faculty teaching RD 475 is addressing that issue.

Writing: It is difficult to assess trends in writing quality as the mix of students continues to have very diverse writing levels. Continual feedback and revision is used to help students improve their writing. As the past SLOA Summary indicated, those students who take the time to meet all project/paper checkpoints through the semester received higher scores in the assessment. However, skill level is not necessarily driving this. It also appears that on campus students with more extracurricular activities struggle with completing their projects/theses and putting time into their writing, whereas many off-campus students put more time and effort into their project/thesis. The faculty teaching RD 475 intends to survey prior students on this and other questions related to the senior project.

Alaska Native Studies, BA

- C. Post Graduate Employment survey: Not conducted. This will be removed from the SLOA Plan. It will be replaced with...

3. Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above

DANSRD faculty met on August 20, 2018 to review this summary report. No specific curricular changes are expected due to this report. The Department completed a major overhaul of the Alaska Native Studies curriculum for catalog year 2017/2018, in part due to the change in the way the university is addressing communications learning outcomes. There are some curriculum changes that are still in process and may result in changes as they are assessed in the future. A subcommittee of DANSRD faculty has formed to revise the SLOA Plan to reflect the communications plan as well as respond to issues identified in this report.

- A. Impressionistic Histories: No curricular changes are planned based on the Impressionistic Histories. However, we plan to slightly revise the IH to assess critical thinking in both oral and written work.
- B. Rural Development Senior Project:
 - a. There have been some changes to the sequencing of RD 475 that may impact ANS:
 - i. RD 350 Community Based Research in Indigenous Contexts – this course has been replaced by two new courses (RD 340 Community Research Toolbox and RD 474 Applied Community Research) starting in AY 2017/2018, however, they will not be taught until there are enough students in that and subsequent catalog years.
 - ii. If we continue to use RD 475 for the ANS senior thesis we will determine how to accommodate these changes for students.
 - b. Writing – we have introduced a new ANS core communications course, ANS 300 Alaska Native Writers Workshop, offered for the first time as a core course spring 2018.
- C. Post Graduate Employment survey: Not conducted. The Graduate survey will be removed from the SLOA Plan.

4. Identify the faculty members involved in reaching the conclusions drawn above and agreeing upon the curricular changes resulting

Jennifer L.L. Carroll
Catherine Brooks
Jenny Bell Jones
Patricia Sekaquaptewa
Charlene Stern