

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
 Department of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development
 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan, Academic year 2013/2014 ANS Baccalaureate Degree
 Please review DANSRD Comprehensive SLOA plan for ANS BA in addition to this document

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose	Intended Objectives/Outcomes	Assessment Criteria and Procedures	Implementation (what, when, who)
<p>MISSION STATEMENT: Our mission is to increase cultural awareness and strengthen leadership capacity for rural and Indigenous communities in Alaska and the Circumpolar North through degree programs that promote academic excellence, personal development, professional skills, global awareness and respect for Indigenous cultures and commitment to community.</p> <p>GOALS:</p> <p>1. Provide a high quality BA degree in Alaska Native Studies that serves as a model of innovation and flexibility in delivering distance education while building on UAF's status as America's premier arctic university .</p> <p>2. Recruit students from around the state and prepare them for the complexity of modern multi-cultural Alaska by thorough examination of the Alaska Native experience and its contemporary applications</p> <p>3. Develop an ANS MLS program that will allow students to access higher level legal education without leaving the state.</p>	<p><u>Clear Communication of SLOA to Faculty and Staff</u> Review and revise written SLOA for ANS BA required core courses. Develop a comprehensive written plan that can be made available to all current and future faculty teaching these courses.</p>	<p>Drafts of SLOA plan were provided to DANSRD faculty and staff for review and comment. Comments were incorporated and subsequent drafts reviewed at weekly meetings.</p>	<p>Final document completed April 2013 and made available to all faculty teaching ANS core classes.</p>
	<p><u>Clear Communication of SLOA to Students</u> SLOA expectations made clear to students in all syllabi and revisited frequently throughout the semester. Any changes and/or additions to course materials are reviewed by faculty to make sure they relate to the SLOA.</p>	<p>Faculty assess level of student understanding at the beginning of class with tool specified in SLOA plan At midterm faculty provide students with clearly defined update on their progress. At term end faculty review assessment tools (exams, papers, oral presentations or other tools as specified in syllabus) and grades student accordingly.</p>	<p>Faculty implement this communication throughout each semester, providing timely warnings to students if they see that SLOA are not being satisfied. Learning Outcomes are revisited regularly to insure that students are on track.</p>
	<p><u>Support of SLOA for Students During the Semester</u> Faculty may contact an individual student's assigned ANS Faculty Advisor during the semester to assist student if they feel learning outcomes are not being met and student has failed to respond to faculty prompts for improvement. Faculty Advisor will meet with student to identify ways to address problem.</p>	<p>Faculty evaluate students' progress in meeting learning outcomes and advise them if they are not doing well. Contact is then established with ANS Faculty Advisor to provide extra assistance to student.</p>	<p>Individual faculty member assigned to course and ANS Faculty Advisor implement this activity as a team.</p>
	<p><u>Development of Student Portfolios for Tracking SLOA Progress</u> Content items for student portfolios have been identified during faculty discussions about SLOA implementation.</p>	<p>Staff person is identified to create the portfolios and be responsible for collection and storage of contents each semester. This staff member will alert the Chair if required portfolio items are not provided to her in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Assigned staff person is primary point of contact. Portfolios are reviewed by Chair at the end of each semester. Any problem areas identified are addressed with student. <date revised 3/27/13></p>

DANSRD STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES SUMMARY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ALASKA NATIVE STUDIES BA

2012/13

DANSRD is performing a comprehensive review of student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) for our Alaska Native Studies (ANS) BA degree program beginning with the required core courses for AY 2012/13 and beyond. This program requires that students complete a set of core courses which provide information and skills for them to continue on and complete a specialized concentration area with courses chosen by the student and their advisor.

ANS core courses:

- ANS F101--Introduction to Alaska Native Studies --3 credits (h)(a)
- ANS/ANTH F242--Native Cultures of Alaska--3 credits (s)(a)
- ANS F310-- Indigenous Land Settlements--3 credits (s)(a)
- ANS F350W, O--Cross Cultural Communication: Alaskan Perspectives--3 credits (s)(a)
- RD 350--Community Research in Indigenous Contexts--3 credits (a)
- ANS F375--Native American Religion and Philosophy--3 credits (h)(a)
- ANS F401--Cultural Knowledge of Native Elders--3 credits (h)(a)
- RD 475--Rural Development Senior Project--3 credits (a)

ANS concentration areas:

- **Alaska Native Forms of Cultural Expression:** *Designed for students whose interests lie in the areas of Alaska Native arts and culture. Students learn about the different forms of Alaska Native cultural expression, both traditional and contemporary, through observation, participation and creation. Graduates may find employment in the arts and entertainment industries, museums and galleries, teaching, tourism, and in the human resource departments of organizations that seek to provide culturally sensitive information to their workforce and to external constituencies.*
- **Alaska Native Education:** *Designed for students interested in improving the quality and delivery of Alaska Native education. Students learn the history of Alaska Native education including shaping forces such as federal Indian policy and education programs. Cross-cultural methods of delivery, learning styles and innovative ways of improving education success especially within Native communities are explored. Graduates may find employment in tribal governments, rural schools and school districts, colleges and universities, and other state and local entities involved in education.*
- **Alaska Native Law, Government and Politics:** *Designed for students with an interest in politics, justice, law and other government related careers. Students learn the basics of federal Indian law and policy, tribal governance in the U.S. and the working relationships between tribal and non-tribal governments. Students compare indigenous governments in other countries and examine international laws that affect indigenous peoples. Graduates may find employment with tribal governments, ANCSA corporations, law firms, and state and local government.*
- **Alaska Native Language:** *Designed for students who want to speak or strengthen the use of an Alaska Native language. Students who choose this concentration may live in a community where one of the Alaska Native languages is still in regular use, or where the community has a strong*

interest in reviving the use of their language. In addition to learning a language, students study teaching methods, curriculum development, and techniques of bi-lingual education. Graduates may find employment as language tutors, teachers,

As part of our review process, DANSRD faculty looked at the UAF Core Learning Outcomes to see how and where our program core would build on these for our students:

- ***UAF Core Learning Outcome 1: Students should, “Build Knowledge of Human Institutions, Socio-Cultural Processes, and the Physical and Natural World through study of the natural and social sciences, technologies, mathematics, humanities, histories, languages and the arts.”***
- ***UAF Core Learning Outcome 2: Students should, “Develop Intellectual and Practical Skills across the Curriculum including inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, written and oral communication, information literacy, technological competence, and collaborative learning.”***
- ***UAF Core Learning Outcome 3: Students should, “Acquire Tools for Effective Civic Engagement in Local through Global Contexts, including Ethical Reasoning, Intercultural Competence, and Knowledge of Alaska and Alaskan Issues.”***
- ***UAF Core Learning Outcome 4: Students should, “Integrate and Apply Learning, including synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies, adapting them to new settings, questions, and responsibilities, and forming a foundation for lifelong learning.”***

We also reviewed our Department Mission Statement to see how well our SLOA aligns with those goals:

Our mission is to increase cultural awareness and strengthen leadership capacity for rural and Indigenous communities in Alaska and the Circumpolar North through degree programs that promote academic excellence, personal development, professional skills, global awareness and respect for Indigenous cultures and commitment to community.

The ANS Core Courses

ANS 101 Introduction to Alaska Native Studies.

In this course we expect students to gain foundational knowledge for the rest of their studies. As such it is probably the most fact based course in our core. Historical events and dates, regional, cultural and language information, laws specific to Alaska Natives and the state, transportation and infrastructure, natural resource development and economic issues, and biographies of Alaska Native leaders are all covered at an entry level and students are provided with a “library” of program related resources that they can use in other courses to facilitate research and learning.

Students are assessed via quizzes, reflection papers, oral participation and two exams; a mid-term and a comprehensive final. Quizzes and exams are entirely fact based and questions cover materials that are designed to introduce students to all the facets of Alaska Native studies. Reflection papers allow students to provide their opinions on cultural subjects where learning cannot be measured by question and answer assessment; these assignments are graded for critical thinking, demonstration of cultural competency, content and writing quality. Oral presentations with specific subjects are assigned which are assessed for clarity, attention to the subject matter and correct representation of facts.

ANS 101 lays a foundation for our students that incorporates major aspects of all four UAF Core Learning Outcomes and is fully in line with the DANSRD mission statement.

ANS/ANTH F242--Native Cultures of Alaska. This course is designed to provide a general background on the indigenous cultures of Alaska as they are now and as they were prior to the arrival of non-indigenous peoples. The course provides a review of each of the large cultural areas with additional thematic topics about kinship, trade relations, oral traditions, art, and music. Discovery of information and theories about indigenous peoples is an ongoing process, and student input is valued and actively sought.

Students are assessed through the use of essay exams and research papers, both of which are designed to develop critical thinking and to improve writing skills. In addition to these measures, students participate in a group research and presentation assignment intended to help develop speaking presentation skills. Since this is a culture class, assessment must be subjective as objective assessments don't reflect a student's knowledge, but only their ability to memorize facts. The essay approach enables students to express what they know in their own way, and to tie it to other aspects of human culture and behavior--a critically important aspect of any concern of cultural studies. Grades are issued according to a student's depth of knowledge on a particular cultural issue according to a series of cultural depth standards.

ANS/ANTH 242 addresses major aspects of all four UAF Core Learning Outcomes and is fully in line with the DANSRD mission statement.

ANS F310-- Indigenous Land Settlements

This course combines fact based learning with critical thinking skills. At the completion of this course students will be able to analyze the mandates of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and describe their application in Alaska today. Students will be able to explain the amendment process and how ANCSA has changed since the Act was originally signed into law. Investigation of a selection of more recent indigenous land settlements and how these have been influenced by ANCSA will allow

students to compare the Act with contemporary international laws and draw conclusions about the Act's influence as well as suggest possible future amendments. Active participation in ANS 310 will provide students with working knowledge of ANCSA and contemporary indigenous land claims. At the completion of the course participants will be able to describe the law and its contents and be able to propose possible future amendments. Students will be able to apply both ANCSA and related law to current situations in Alaska.

Learning is assessed by quizzes, written and oral presentations and a comprehensive final paper with a choice of assigned topics. The quizzes are fact based and are tied to the legislation studied in class; quiz questions require students to develop the ability to read and interpret the legislation and cite it correctly. Papers and oral presentations require students to interpret materials and present the content correctly. The final paper is assessed on critical thinking about the material, correctness and applicability of content and writing mechanics.

ANS 310 contains materials and assignments that further achievement of UAF Core Learning Outcomes two, three and four as well as falling well within the parameters of the DANSRD mission.

ANS F350W, O--Cross Cultural Communication: Alaskan Perspectives

This cross cultural communication course stresses the promotion of understanding, respect, and acceptance of cultural diversity within our society. It provides learning experiences that promote strength and understanding through diversity. It recognizes the importance of collaboration between individuals regardless of their backgrounds or location. This course provides a personal and interactive examination of the complex issues and aspects of cross cultural communication as they apply specifically to Alaska. Students discuss cultural influences on communication patterns. Students examine how misunderstandings may develop from differently organized ways of speaking and thinking when cultures come into contact. Focus is on Alaska, with its diversity of cultures and languages, as a microcosm for examining these issues, particularly as they affect Native and non-Native communication in institutional settings.

At the conclusion of the course, students will have the information necessary to discuss in a thoughtful & constructive manner issues of cross cultural communication with a specific emphasis on Alaska. Students will examine and compare their personal perspectives with those presented in the readings and course discussions related to communication in a cross cultural framework. Students will learn to discuss major terms, concepts and theories in cross-cultural communication. Students will gain an appreciation for the reciprocal relationship between communication & culture.

This course is both writing and oral intensive, and student outcomes are measured through a combination of oral reports on assigned readings, a variety of "mini assignments" including an autobiography, terminology, written abstract related to cross-cultural communication, in- class

exercises and a case study, contents of their course related portfolio, a final research paper and a mid-term one-on-one interview with the instructor.

ANS 350 is especially applicable to UAF Core Learning Outcome three, while also incorporating foundational skills from one, two and four. It also meets DANSRD Mission Statement guidelines.

RD 350--Community Research in Indigenous Contexts

Community-based research takes place in community settings and involves community members in the design and implementation of research projects. This approach demonstrates respect for the contributions made by the community members involved in such research. Research is a powerful tool for community development. Certain trends of thought have shaped policies and methods of research and development. This course will examine a few of those trends and contrast them with current trends in community based research. The roots of community-based research are derived largely from descriptive research and information that comes from within the community. There will be an emphasis on the role and need for community-based research and ethical issues associated with it. Blackboard is used in this course extensively. The development of a sound research proposal is a fundamental first step in research. This assignment requires you to produce your research proposal step-by-step. There will be a minimum of two class sessions devoted to one-on-one progress/development of your final research project. This feedback will allow you to revise, if necessary, your components and prepare a final research project for an in-class presentation at the conclusion of the semester. The case study model will be utilized to demonstrate the components of community based research and will be discussed at length in class.

Course Objectives and Goals include exploration of ethical and cultural issues surrounding the process of research. Students will be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of intellectual & cultural property rights and explain ethical principles for research. They will explore existing resources related to oral histories, library & museum resources and develop skills in conducting effective oral history documentation. Assignments will build oral presentation skills as well as visual and media presentation skills, create awareness and encourage dialogue about the gap between researchers and Native communities and organizations

This is a skill based course with emphasis on hands on learning that requires students to fulfill the requirements of an oral communications intensive core curriculum course. The expected outcome is that students will be able to conduct their own community based research and evaluation of projects in rural communities and regions upon course completion and effectively use evaluation techniques.

Students are assessed on their learning via their development of a survey tool and a research project. Additionally they must participate in group projects and give oral presentations. Their knowledge and understanding of key research reports and projects is assessed through these oral presentations. RD 350 will help students to achieve all four UAF Core Learning Outcomes as well as fulfilling the mandates of the DANSRD Mission Statement.

ANS F375--Native American Religion and Philosophy

This course is designed to introduce students to Native American religious practices through writings by Native American and Alaska Native authors. The course will focus on a close examination of the study of Native American religions and philosophies from an individual approach through class discussions and readings. Historical, economic, environmental, political and legal issues that have influenced past, present and future are examined and a student journal will be kept that reflects individual student understanding and reaction to the work presented in the course. There will be an in-depth final research paper that is reflective of class discussions, guest speaker commentary and readings.

Objectives and goals for the course include:

- Student appreciation for the various forms of Native American philosophical thought and a recognition of the difference between the religious practices
- Knowledge of themes & contemporary issues represented in Native American religions
- Historical influences and outcomes of Native American religious practices as well as the understanding of the importance of spirituality in everyday lives and communities of Native people today
- Exploration of religious identity among Native American populations today
- Sensitivity to the issues of Native people as they relate to the study of Native religions.

The overarching learning outcome for this course is for students to be able to demonstrate and apply critical thinking skills and observations when exposed to controversial issues within the realm of Native American religions and show concrete evidence of individual & collaborative learning skills as evidenced through assigned readings, course discussions & maintenance of a journal intended to be self-reflective in nature. These outcomes are assessed through guided journal entries, "mini assignments" oral presentations and reviews of assigned readings, and a comprehensive final research paper. In addition each student must participate in a half hour one-on-one oral interview with the instructor at mid-term.

ANS 375 incorporates aspect of all four UAF Core Learning Outcomes and looks in depth at personal development and global awareness and respect for Indigenous cultures ... all important parts of the DANSRD mission.

ANS F401--Cultural Knowledge of Native Elders

This course permits study with prominent Native tradition bearers in Native philosophies, values, and oral traditions. Traditional knowledge is elicited through the cultural heritage documentation process. Study analyzes existing interactions between cultural traditions and contemporary American life as experienced by Native elders. This is subject matter for which student learning is particularly difficult to measure. While of course a student can fairly quickly figure out what the “right” kind of responses and participation look like the outcome we are most interested in, and the one most difficult to measure, is how well students have internalized knowledge and how they will use it in the future. Stated outcomes for the course are as follows:

- Students will be able to discuss the importance of Alaska Native Elder’s knowledge of traditional cultural learning systems and demonstrate their acquisition of the Indigenous sociocultural theoretical frameworks and methods**
- Students will apply their understanding of Indigenous knowledge systems within larger social systems and be familiar with how Alaska Native Elders are identified and how an individual attains the status of Elder**
- Compare a variety of Alaska Native Elder worldviews on topics of (but not limited to) traditional healing, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Alaska Native values, and leadership styles, and be able to clearly define “Traditional Knowledge”**
- Demonstrate their ability to incorporate Alaska Native Elders and their knowledge into classrooms experiences and other executive decision making processes.**

Outcomes are assessed via written journal entries, in class participation and facilitation, a mid-term and a final paper. Students are graded on demonstration of critical thinking about the subject matter presented in class, the ways they have indicated that they will use this learning in the future, their personal interactions with Elder guests, and their descriptions of how they plan to integrate Alaska Native Elders and their knowledge into future professional endeavors and social activities.

ANS 401 incorporates aspect of all the UAF Core Learning Outcomes but has special application to the first, as it helps students to understand and appreciate how Alaska Natives have built their own knowledge of human institutions, socio-cultural processes, and the physical and natural world through study of the natural and social sciences, technologies, mathematics, humanities, histories, languages and the arts since time immemorial, and how this knowledge can be valued and used today. This course also fits well within the Mission Statement parameters.

RD 475--Rural Development Senior Project

The Rural Development Senior Project is a capstone course for the ANS program which is intended to let the student draw together the concepts, ideas, vocabulary, case studies and situations learned in the ANS courses and in the chosen concentration area and to apply them in a way that results in either an expansion and extension of knowledge or in a tangible product/project that benefits others. RD475W allows the student to choose one of two options: (1) write a research paper (about 30 to 35 pages in length) exploring a specific ANS program topic of interest, building on concepts relevant to Alaska Native Studies, or (2) develop an allied project related to the chosen ANS concentration area that illustrates the student's ability to put learning from the program into practice.

The final product becomes a part of the student's portfolio. These projects are very student specific; each one is unique. Nevertheless, each one meets the parameters of the Mission Statement, and in successfully completing this capstone course, students will be achieving key Core Learning Outcome aspects.

Students choosing the research paper option begin with either a thesis statement or a research question which involves inquiry focused on primary and secondary research which then requires analysis, critical thinking, and discriminative evaluation (Outcome two). Students choosing the applied research (project) option identify a rural or community problem and apply what they have learned in order to mitigate, ameliorate, or eliminate it (Outcomes three and four). As projects develop, each student regularly reports progress and class feedback and recommendations are solicited. This process develops skills related to Outcomes two, three and four.

The assessment tool for this course is the completed research paper or project which must meet the standards imposed by the instructor. The final product becomes a part of the student's portfolio.

THE STUDENT PORTFOLIOS:

To help us keep track of and measure student progress and the achievement of learning outcomes, DANSRD administrative staff will maintain SLOA portfolios for all degree seeking students. These will include the following: name, date of admission, advisor, concentration area, planned graduation date and actual graduation date. They will also contain a baseline writing sample for comparison with future submissions, the dates all ANS core courses are completed, dates of student/advisor meeting and applicable notes, and impressionistic history forms completed for each term the student attends. Notes and impressionistic history forms will be used to identify any problem areas a student may need assistance in, as well as special interest areas the student may have that are not being supported with elective and concentration area course choices. Portfolios will be reviewed annually by all DANSRD faculty.

HOW WE ADDRESS NEEDED CHANGES TO CURRICULUM:

It is important that our curriculum addresses our stated learning outcomes while at the same time staying current with the needs of our students and their communities. This is the first comprehensive review of the ANS courses that DANSRD has undertaken since the merger of the ANS program into the Department. This review has only covered the ANS core required courses and has been helpful in identifying areas that need revision. Faculty discuss SLOA for different courses on a regular basis at weekly faculty meetings and address gaps with updates and changes to curriculum as well as the development of new course offerings such as ANS 493, Politics of Indigenous Identity. This course was developed by Dr. Gordon Pullar in AY 2011/12 in response to an identified “gap” in our course materials and is now under Faculty Senate review for inclusion as a permanent ANS elective.

A separate review is underway for ANS elective courses currently being offered on a regular basis and, as a result of the core review, it is now part of DANSRD policy to provide new adjuncts with the detailed SLOA description for any elective courses they may be hired to teach to make sure that their course materials meet the requirement.

This ANS core report was circulated amongst DANSRD faculty for comment during February 2013 and suggested changes were incorporated if appropriate. The intent is to use the SLOA for individual courses to guide curriculum additions, and for individual faculty to be able to refer to the SLOA for courses they teach as a starting point for further course development.

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