

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
Department of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan, Academic year 2013/14 RD Baccalaureate Degree
Please review DANSRD Comprehensive SLOA plan for RD 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:</p> <p>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 interdisciplinary BA degree in Rural Development 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. Educate our students in leadership, governance, community planning, business and rural development, and tribal management.</p>	<p><u>Clear Communication of SLOA to Faculty and Staff</u></p> <p>Review and revise written SLOA for RD 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 RD core classes.</p>
	<p><u>Clear Communication of SLOA to Students</u></p> <p>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></p> <p>Faculty may contact an individual student's assigned RD 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 RD Faculty Advisor to provide extra assistance to student.</p>	<p>Individual faculty member assigned to course and RD Faculty Advisor implement this activity as a team.</p>
	<p><u>Development of Student Portfolios for Tracking SLOA Progress</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p><Revised 3/26/13></p>

DANSRD STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES SUMMARY

RURAL DEVELOPMENT BA

2012/13

DANSRD is performing a comprehensive review of student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) for our Rural Development (RD) BA degree program 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 and complete a specialized concentration area with courses chosen by the students and their advisor.

RD core courses:

- RD F300W--Rural Development in a Global Perspective
- RD F325--Community Development Strategies
- RD F350O--Indigenous Knowledge and Community Research
- RD F351--Strategic Planning for Rural Communities
- RD F352--Rural Business Planning and Proposal Development
- RD F400--Rural Development Internship
- RD F450--Managing Rural Projects and Programs
- RD F475W--Rural Development Senior Project

RD concentration areas as of AY 2013/14:

- **Rural Community Business and Economic Development Planning:** *Designed for students interested in creating sustainable economies in rural and indigenous communities, with a focus on small business development. Students learn business and marketing plans development, economic development planning, and basic principles of financial and human resources management for rural enterprises. Graduates may find employment in ANCSA corporations, regional development organizations, economic development agencies, and as local entrepreneurs.*
- **Indigenous Organization Management:** *Designed for students interested in development and operations of Indigenous organizations in rural Alaska. Students develop an understanding of the history and constitutional basis for tribal governance, the basics of federal Indian law, the principles and practices of self-determination and the mandates of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). They develop skills in planning, budgeting, and human resources management. Students with special interests in areas such as management of health programs, tribal governance programs or Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs), can tailor this concentration to these interests by choosing related courses and electives. Graduates may find employment*

with tribal and municipal governments and organizations, ANCSA corporations, and state and federal agencies.

- **Community Research and Indigenous Knowledge:** *Designed for students interested in applied research involving Alaska Native communities, cultures, languages, ceremonial performances and histories. Students learn principles of ethical research, explore issues of intellectual and cultural property rights, and acquire skills to do ethnographies, oral histories, community surveys and needs assessments and archival research. Graduates may find employment with museums, ANCSA corporations, tribal governments, and federal and state agencies.*
- **Community Health and Wellness:** *Designed for students with a strong interest in health and wellness. Students focus on the various facets of a healthy rural community. Going beyond the basics of health care, they explore different aspects of wellness within a community and develop tools to attain community wellness goals. Students blend and apply both contemporary and traditional health and wellness approaches. Graduates may find employment with tribal governments, health corporations, clinics and schools.*
- **Natural Resource Development:** *Designed for students with an interest in land and resources development, co-management and conservation. Students learn about traditional ecological knowledge, principles of natural resources management and policy, adaptive management, conservation and eco-tourism, and develop skills for promoting effective public/private/tribal collaboration in resource management. Management strategies for addressing climate change are explored. Graduates may find employment with ANCSA corporations, regional and tribal entities, state and federal agencies, and private businesses.*

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 RD Core Courses

RD F300W--Rural Development in a Global Perspective

As a required course, Rural Development in a Global Perspective provides the student with a critical understanding of interrelationships between local communities and the global economy. The course highlights issues such as poverty, the status of women, community health and well-being, sustainable livelihoods, and globalization. Students learn new vocabulary, read and analyze conflicting histories, examine theoretical concepts critically, and discuss and debate different interpretations of “development.”

Throughout the course, relationships between Alaska and the developing world are addressed. Students need to be aware of the global context in order to fully understand the forces of change in rural Alaska.

In this introductory course, students focus on the rapid social, economic, and cultural changes that affect Alaska’s communities. These changes and their inter-relationships are explored in greater depth in subsequent Rural Development courses.

Course Objectives:

- Students will develop knowledge concerning the multiple and sometimes contradictory meanings of development as used in Alaska and around the globe

- **Students will acquire key concepts and vocabulary basic to understanding development such as colonialism, poverty, the developing world, the global capitalist economy, transnational corporations, non-governmental organizations, gender, and cultural identity**
- **Students will explore theoretical approaches associated with development such as modernization, underdevelopment, globalization, localization, and sustainability**
- **Students will analyze central issues and debates within international and rural development focusing on sustainable communities, industrialization, environment and development, indigenous knowledge systems, gender, and cultural aspects of development**
- **At the completion of this course, students will be able to evaluate processes of colonization, political and economic marginalization, and globalization affecting Alaska, including efforts of communities to respond creatively and in culturally appropriate ways to these forces.**

These learning objectives are measured by written assignments. RD 300W is a designated writing intensive course and in addition to the goals noted above, students are expected to develop and improve the technical writing skills they will need throughout the RD program. Students submit four comprehensive papers throughout the semester, and must meet specific criteria such as the use of a pre-determined style guide and required participation in oral discussions. They also must attend a mandatory session with the UAF Writing Center prior to completing the course.

RD 300 incorporates elements of all four UAF Core Learning Outcomes, and provides a strong foundation for aligning student outcomes with the mandates of the Department Mission.

RD F325--Community Development Strategies

This course provides undergraduate students with an understanding of the principles and strategies of asset-based development in rural communities throughout the world. Students explore the history of community development ideas and case studies of specific strategies in Alaska. As part of the course, invited speakers will provide their perspectives on topics related to community development strategies in rural Alaska and in the global community.

Course Objectives:

The primary objective of this class is to present students with information and tools that facilitate strategies for rural development. Supporting objectives are:

- **To learn and apply the basic concepts and principles of community development in a way that is useful in rural Alaska**

- To learn and apply the capacity based approach of community development and to focus on community assets and strengths
- To practice the development of appropriate community development strategies that fit the setting and context in which one works and lives
- To analyze, apply and further develop the basic concepts of community development practice, theory, process and approaches to help develop and sustain community health in rural Alaska.

These outcomes are measured by written assignments and responses in the Blackboard forums set up for the class. Students' abilities to articulate a concept of community development as it relates to their community, identify assets in their community, produce an in-depth community profile and complete a final project for their community are assessed through these assignments.

RD 325 involves aspects of UAF Core Learning Outcomes two through four and strongly supports the leadership mandate of the DANSRD Mission.

RD F350 O--Indigenous Knowledge and Community Research

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. 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 (but are not limited to):

- Exploration of ethical and cultural issues surrounding the process of research
- Working knowledge of intellectual & cultural property rights
- Ethical principles for research
- Existing resources related to oral histories, library & museum resources
- Skills in conducting effective oral history documentation

- Ability to conduct survey research and assessments
- Knowledge about techniques of evaluation
- Building oral presentation skills as well as visual and media presentation skills
- Emphasis will be hands-on-learning. Students will be able to conduct their own research and evaluation of projects in rural communities and regions upon course completion
- Community-based research defined through the case study model approach
- Creating awareness and encouraging dialogue about the gap between researchers and Native communities and organizations
- Fulfilling the requirements of an oral communications intensive core curriculum course.

This is a skills based course. Students are assessed on their learning via their development of a survey tool and a research project. Additionally they must participate in group projects, one on one oral sessions with the instructor and give oral presentations in class. Their knowledge and understanding of key research reports and projects is assessed through these oral presentations.

RD 350 involves aspects of all four UAF Core Learning Outcomes and strengthens skills needed to support the leadership mandate of the DANSRD Mission.

RD F351--Strategic Planning for Rural Communities

This course examines the major components of planning and grant writing processes as they relate to community level land use, business and social service projects.

Goals of the course include introducing students to an overview of community planning efforts as well as an understanding of grant opportunities and strategic community planning skills as they relate to community plans. The majority of assignments will be posted on Black Board for peer review and comment.

Student Learning Outcomes include:

- Students will be able to identify community needs and develop a proposal based upon those needs
- Students will examine the role of community and regional planning in rural communities and develop a competence in planning techniques appropriate to those communities
- Students will expand their writing capabilities and oral presentation skills
- Students will also gain an understanding of the importance of networking, teamwork, grant management and administration.

These outcomes are measured via the development of a community plan with funding options related to community land-use and community development specific to a village or other social service area and practical assessment of participation in outside planning meetings.

RD 351 has special connection to UAF Core Learning Outcomes three and four and fully supports the DANSRD Mission.

RD F352--Rural Business Planning and Proposal Development

This course provides undergraduate students with an introduction to business planning and feasibility analysis with a focus on their applications in rural Alaska. It is a project-based class in which students will propose and develop their ideas about an Alaskan business into a feasibility analysis of narrative and numbers and a completed business plan.

Goals of the course include exploration of how business enterprises can provide benefits in rural Alaska and development of an understanding of why markets and customers are important to the operation and success of a business enterprise. Students analyze what kind of information is important to business analysis and investigate how to develop information through research. They attain the ability to develop a business idea, describe it in words and analyze it with numbers. And they discuss the importance of business sustainability and appropriateness for the host community. Student learning outcomes are aligned with the course goals and are measured by the completion of their business plan and how well the various components of that plan could actually be applied.

Outcomes are assessed via writing and research assignments, a class project and a final exam.

RD F352 incorporates aspects of all four UAF Core Learning Outcomes and fully supports the DANSRD Mission.

RD F400--Rural Development Internship

Students gain structured experience in an appropriate agency or corporate setting. Students and instructor work collaboratively to identify an appropriate internship that will provide the student with applicable skills for job search, workplace retention, and basic managerial, planning and organizational tasks. A suitable internship will require students to spend at least 120 hours during the semester participating in planning, project management, memo and report writing, group facilitation and work with a board of directors in meaningful ways that facilitate learning. Students who come to the RD program with significant workplace experience in a relevant setting may satisfy this core requirement without a field placement if they meet other requirements assigned by the instructor. A

student must have at least three years relevant employment experience to waive the field requirement. Student learning outcomes are assessed using journals kept throughout the internship, reports from agency intern supervisors, final written papers about the experience, and a formal student self-evaluation.

RD 400 is program specific and fully supports the DANSRD Mission. Since each student's experience in the course is unique, at minimum UAF Core Learning Outcomes two and three will be achieved.

RD F450--Managing Rural Projects and Programs

This course examines appropriate management and accountability approaches for community-based programs and projects, particularly those found in rural and/or cross-cultural contexts in Alaska. The focus of the course is on management of small-scale, community-based programs and projects. The course prepares students to manage a wide variety of programs or projects and to develop and increase skills for work such as overseeing a village corporation, operating a small business, and managing community service or tribal government programs.

Expected outcomes for the course include development of individual leadership skills and mastery of those needed for success. Students examine the basic elements of project/program planning, design, implementation, and management applicable to rural and cross-cultural context in Alaska. They explore the changing role of managers in rural economies and identify the skills, techniques, and technologies critical for success in management. The importance of recognizing local values and concerns, as well as the expectations and demands placed on managers is stressed.

Outcomes are measured via oral presentations and participation, reaction papers, final paper and a detailed written review of an existing project or program.

RD 450 connects especially with UAF Core Learning Outcomes two and four and supports DANSRD's Mission to develop leadership for Native and rural communities in Alaska.

RD F475W--Rural Development Senior Project

The Rural Development Senior Project is a capstone course for the RD program which is intended to let the student draw together the concepts, ideas, vocabulary, case studies and situations learned in the RD 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 RD program topic of interest which builds on concepts relevant to

Rural Development, or (2) develop an allied project related to the chosen RD concentration area that illustrates the student's ability to put learning from the program into practice.

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

RD projects are student-specific, and while each one is unique, each one also meets the parameters of the Mission Statement. In successfully completing this capstone course, students will be developing skills directly related to UAF Core Learning Outcomes two, three and four.

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 RD 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 RD courses that DANSRD has undertaken for a number of years. When review started it became apparent that the concentration areas needed to be updated to better align with the Department goals and mission. This task was completed in December 2012 and the change forms were submitted in February 2013 for inclusion in all future catalogs. The concentration areas referenced earlier in this report are the product of that revision effort. The new concentration areas will assist us in measuring and meeting overall SLOA for the program as they include more DANSRD course choices and are more closely focused on currently identified student and employer needs than those used previously.

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. One of issues noted in our review was a lack of regularly offered lower division RD courses which we are now rectifying by the regular inclusion of RD 200, RD 245 and RD 265 in our long term schedule. A separate review is underway for RD 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 RD core report was circulated amongst DANSRD faculty for comment during March 2013 and suggested changes were incorporated if appropriate. The intent is to use the SLOA for individual courses to guide curriculum additions and changes, 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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