

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
Department of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan Academic Year 2012/2013 RD MA Degree

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 strengthen leadership capacity for indigenous communities in Alaska and the Circumpolar North through degree programs that promote academic excellence, personal development, professional skills, global awareness, respect for indigenous cultures, and commitment to community.</p> <p>GOALS:</p> <p>1. Offer a quality program of advanced study for place-committed students in rural Alaska, combining personal networking with cutting-edge distance education delivery.</p> <p>2. Educate leaders with a broad understanding of interrelationships between rural communities and the dynamic global economy.</p> <p>3. Maintain an innovative model for circumpolar graduate study with a particular emphasis on international leadership development accessible to students.</p>	<p>1) Graduates will be hired in their communities and regions in the fields of rural and community development , or will be advanced in their employment status if already employed, or will continue on to further graduate or professional education.</p>	<p>Graduates will be tracked after graduation via surveys and continued contact with DANSRD faculty.</p> <p>Learning communities developed during their studies will be maintained to help with the updates of employment/education status and graduates will be invited to new student orientations and encouraged to participate in classes as guest speakers.</p>	<p>Department administrative staff will administer surveys during spring each year.</p> <p>Faculty will maintain ongoing contact with graduates and involve them in future courses.</p> <p>Grads will be invited as speakers at annual new grad student orientation.</p>
	<p>2) Graduates will progress through their program of study in a reasonably expedient manner. While the optimum goal would be graduation in two years we will aim for the average student obtaining their MA within five years.</p>	<p>Progress will be assessed via regular review of the student's file by admin staff. When a student appears to have missed a deadline or an expected activity has not taken place within a reasonable time frame, the Committee Chair will receive a reminder.</p>	<p>Admin staff review files on a per semester basis.</p> <p>Committee Chair receives a notification if needed.</p> <p>Department Chair follows up with student if he/she does not respond to contact from Committee Chair.</p>
	<p>Upon completion of the program, graduates in RD will demonstrate leadership capacities for effective oral and written communication including use of best available computer hardware and software. They will use the network built up during their studies to connect with international and national issues and apply their knowledge across the Arctic.</p>	<p>Students will participate in the effective use of written and oral communication, demonstrating capacity through seminar presentations and coursework. Committee will provide support for writing of thesis or compilation of project</p> <p>Goal is assessed via completion of RD 698/699 thesis or project, faculty assessment of student presentations and comprehensive exam results.</p>	<p>Students will receive intensive instruction in effective oral and written communication, including use of computers, face-to-face seminars and web-based instruction throughout their program and will be provided with opportunities for networking.</p> <p>With the help of grant funding, students will make presentations at conferences and meetings including those in international locations.</p>

<Revised 4/15/13>

DANSRD STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES SUMMARY

RURAL DEVELOPMENT MA

2012/13

DANSRD is performing a comprehensive review of student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) for our Rural Development (RD) MA degree program required core courses for AY 2012/13 and beyond. The Department of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development M.A. program is designed to educate leaders who understand the dynamic relationship of rural Alaska with the global economy *and who* have professional skills in areas of leadership, business development, administration and conflict management. Graduates typically take positions with tribal and municipal governments, fisheries, tourism, Native corporations, regional health corporations or non-profits, state/federal agencies, or other private businesses.

Graduate degree students gain a broader theoretical understanding of development processes in Alaska and the circumpolar North. Graduate students complete a thesis or applied community development project, and have opportunities for international study and research.

RD MA Core Courses:

RD F600--Circumpolar Indigenous Leadership Symposium

RD F601--Political Economy of the Circumpolar North

RD F625--Community Development Strategies: Principles and Practices

RD F650--Community-Based Research Methods

RD F651--Management Strategies for Rural Development

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.

In addition we referred to UAF's Core Themes as shown below to make sure our SLOA meet these as well:

Educate: Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Discover: Through Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity including an emphasis on the North and its Peoples

Prepare: Alaska's Career, Technical, and Professional Workforce

Connect: Alaska Native, Rural, and Urban Communities through Contemporary and Traditional Knowledge

Engage: Alaskans via Lifelong Learning, Outreach, and Community and Economic Development

The RD Core Courses

RD F600--Circumpolar Indigenous Leadership Symposium

Course Description: Intensive face-to-face graduate seminar over a week-long period. Held every fall either in Fairbanks or Anchorage. This is a cornerstone course for all M.A. students in the program. The content focuses on indigenous leadership and includes presentations by practitioners from throughout Alaska and the circumpolar North. It also presents an orientation in depth to the graduate program. This course may be repeated once for elective credit. Prerequisites: Graduate standing or permission of instructor. Note: RD F600 is required of all graduate students in the Rural Development program.

Course Objectives:

- To build an integrated learning and career development community that includes new and continuing students and RD faculty and that can be sustained over time and distance.
- To explore individually and collectively the qualities of indigenous leadership in a demanding cross-cultural environment that enable rural community leaders to be effective in a highly dynamic world.
- To draw from the firsthand insights and wisdom of experienced leaders from indigenous and other rural communities in Alaska and beyond.
- To lay a foundation for successful completion of the RD Master's program through continued involvement in face-to-face seminars and the use of quality distance education modes of delivery (including web-based courses, audio conferences, televised courses, internships, mentorships, and applied community-based research projects).
- To learn about post-graduate opportunities in the RD program and to gain insights into areas such as the study of leadership, research, professional development, and self-understanding that will be useful at any academic level and in a wide variety of work settings.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students will have gained a familiarity with general leadership concepts, literature, and primary academic and general writers. They will be able to analyze effective leadership practices from the perspectives of distinguished Native elders and modern leaders. They will articulate a beginning definition of indigenous leadership and develop it into a sharpened working definition which takes into account academic perspectives and traditional and current examples provided by resident elders and guests.

They will be able to present a thoughtful analysis of personal leadership philosophy and goals. These outcomes are measured by prepared oral presentations, and active participation in face to face discussions as well as audio meetings and written assignments due throughout the course.

RD 600 meets the mandates of the DANSRD Mission and addresses the UAF Core Themes

RD F601--Political Economy of the Circumpolar North

Course Description: This course provides an overview of the interrelationships between rural communities and the circumpolar North, and global socioeconomic, political, and ecological systems. The course includes major theoretical positions in our understanding of modern development, using a comparative case-study approach to understand rapid socioeconomic change in the North. Development trends in the circumpolar North, and their potential future consequences, will be set within a historical context to enable an understanding of the processes that led to current conditions.

Course Objectives:

- To explore changing theoretical conceptions and applications of “development” in the global economy, with particular reference to discussion of sustainable development in the circumpolar north.
- To examine contemporary interrelationships between rural northern communities and the global economy, with particular reference to issues of culture change, subsistence and cash economies, global climate change, health, and changing power relationships between indigenous peoples and nation-states.
- To develop a broad awareness of comparative political, economic, and cultural systems in the circumpolar North through analysis of case studies.

Student Learning Outcomes: At the completion of this course, students should be able to articulate clearly their understanding of the foundations of modern development and how development which takes place in Alaska relates to the state's position as the Arctic representative within the United States. They should be able to analyze how Alaska is influenced by international events and present working suggestions for the creation of future policy regarding development in Alaska. These outcomes are measured using a comprehensive examination of course materials, six reaction papers spaced throughout the course, formal oral presentations and a final semester paper.

As a result of our SLOA review we are satisfied that these outcomes are measurable and that the course meets both the mandates of our DANSRD Mission and UAF's Core Themes.

RD F625--Community Development Strategies: Principles and Practices

Course Description: This course provides graduate level students with an overview of the principles and practices of community development. The course will examine community development theory as it relates to the context of rural Alaska. Students will be introduced to basic skills used by professional planners and other community development practitioners. As part of the course, invited speakers will provide their perspectives on a range of topics related to community development.

Course Objectives:

- Present information and tools that facilitate the planning and implementation of community development strategies.
- Encourage students to consider new and creative approaches to community development.

The class examines principles of community development; a framework for building community development strategies and plans; tools for analyzing data and population trends in rural Alaska and ways to identify and effectively access funding resources. The primary outcome expected from students in RD 625 is that they be able to apply these principles, strategies and tools, and demonstrate capacity to further develop and improve upon what they have learned in class. This outcome is measured via class assignments, the development of a comprehensive proposal and a final written paper supported by in-class oral presentations.

This course addresses key aspects of both the DANSRD Mission and all four UAF Core Themes.

RD F650--Community-Based Research Methods

Course Description: This course involves an exploration of community-based research principles and practices. Emphasis is placed on developing a thorough understanding of the community research process from conceptualization to implementation and evaluation. Coursework includes the in-depth review of ideas, practices, and concepts of quantitative and qualitative research within communities, and the role of respect and cultural understanding in conducting research.

Course Objectives: This course is designed to provide both a historical background to community research, to highlight its successes or failures, and to provide applied skills to be used in future research. With these as the primary motivations for the course, the following objectives will be pursued:

- To examine critical perspectives on the research endeavor, with a focus on relationships between indigenous peoples and conventional academic research.
- To understand emerging new approaches to community-based research, with a focus on indigenous and other community perspectives.
- To gain the skills needed to conduct research in our own communities, with a goal of incorporating the critical insights and perspectives gained from readings, discussions, and presentations.

This course reviews the contradictions between research viewed as an exciting means of learning about the world and also as a means of subtle or overt exploitation. Students examine critically some major concepts and strategies of community-based research. They explore questions of validity, subjectivity versus objectivity, assumptions about "truth," views about the role of research, and relationships between the researcher and local communities. Primary outcomes expected for students in this course include the ability to recognize what constitutes community based research,

analyze its importance to Indigenous communities and the ways in which research may become a valuable tool to be used by these communities themselves rather than one to be used by outsiders. Students will be able to complete their own IRB application and will be responsible for using the concepts, approaches, and practices explored in class to do a community-oriented research project of their own. They will apply what they have learned to their final thesis or project in the RD MA program. These outcomes are measured through the quality of in class participation, oral summaries of reading, a mid-term examination, student presentations and discussion and a final project paper. RD 650 meets the requirements of the DANSRD Mission and all four UAF Core Themes and ensures that students are fully prepared to undertake the research required for their final project or thesis.

RD F651--Management Strategies for Rural Development

Course Description: This course provides an overview of the management by change and development within indigenous communities and/or in remote rural village settings. The course looks at management strategies implemented in Alaska involving the management of areas in Alaska's Unorganized Boroughs, regional and municipal organizations (Title 29), Alaska Native tribal governments, corporations and other organizations (including the co-op model). The course uses comparative case studies and effects of cultural and traditional values on management practices in different socio-cultural environments. Contemporary leadership models will be reviewed.

Course Objectives: The primary objective of this class is to present information and tools that facilitate the management strategies for rural development. The class will examine:

- Principles of strategic planning as it relates to communities and development organizations;
- Tools, knowledge, and insights necessary to design and implement effective, locally owned, locally driven, and sustainable management practices;
- A framework for developing management strategies and plans;
- Review of sustainability and ethnographic approaches;
- Ways to increase local capacity as part of a management strategy;
- Ways to maximize effective sub-regional and regional coordination;
- Insights for building useful regional and local community development protocols and partnerships that maximize resources and opportunities; and,
- Ways to identify and effectively access funding resources.

Student Learning Outcomes include the expectation that students will indicate via their assignments that they can challenge assumptions, apply critical thinking and share and explore creative ideas. These outcomes are measured using the development of individual project proposals, a final consultancy report, other written assignments and oral summaries of reading assignments.

RD 651 further develops the leadership component of the DANSRD Mission and addresses all four UAF Core Themes in detail.

HOW WE USE THE SLOA REVIEW AND ADDRESS NEEDED CHANGES TO CURRICULUM

This review process provided us with an opportunity to look at all of our core MA courses “side by side” and review syllabi for any needed revisions. It also gave us a way to make sure we are not repeating information unnecessarily. Faculty were provided with the report during April 2013 and given the opportunity to make changes to the information concerning their courses and suggest changes/additions for others; the final report reflects these changes.

The SLOA report for the MA program was developed concurrently with a review of how DANSRD manages its MA program and was helpful in making some changes here as well -- especially those relating to how we admit students and guide their progress.

During the review process we noted that we have only added one new offering to our graduate level courses in the last five years. This course, *RD670 The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act: Pre-1971 to present*, was developed by Dr. Gordon Pullar with support from Professor Dixie Dayo in response to requests from the community that we offer more courses on ANCSA. It may be time to add another course, and we are investigating the possibility of a 600 level course on the legislative process which would be developed as a companion course to the RD 492 Legislative Seminar.

As DANSRD looks at the future and the development of a Master’s in Legal Studies we will be using our SLOA development and review process in this area as well following the format we have developed for the Rural Development Master’s Program.

DEPARTMENT OF ALASKA NATIVE STUDIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR DEPARTMENT OF ALASKA NATIVE STUDIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
RURAL DEVELOPMENT MA PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**INCLUDING: Outcomes Assessment Implementation Summary updated 4/15/13
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan, Academic year 2013/2014 updated 4/15/13
Comprehensive plan for MA Core Required Courses developed 2013**

**Compiled by J B Jones with contributions from DANSRD faculty
4/15/2013**

This document addresses RD MA core required courses and their respective SLOA; a supplement for elective courses will be added at a later date.

Table 4.1 Outcomes Assessment Implementation Summary
Updated 4/15/13

Complete a separate table for each degree and certificate program (will be updated through 2009-10 for Accreditation)

	Academic Year		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Assessment information collected	End of semester student surveys Graduate surveys Employer surveys Review of student papers and projects	End of semester student surveys Graduate surveys Employer surveys Review of student papers and projects	End of semester student surveys Graduate surveys Employer surveys Review of student papers and projects Notes from faculty meetings Student comments
Conclusions drawn from the information collected above and how are faculty collectively involved in drawing conclusions	Fall 2010 geographical range of applicants continues to broaden. Faculty reviews all applicants at weekly meetings to ascertain suitability for program. Discussion continues about possibility of a follow-up course on ANCSA implementation. ANCSA RD 693/493 course has been very successful.	Fall 2011/spring 2012 faculty meetings focus on improved skills for students in all areas and providing them with stronger committees. Need for flexibility in format of comprehensive exams identified. Need for better adherence to GSP by students identified.	Fall 2012/spring 2013 faculty meetings addressed concerns about effective participation of the graduate team (Chair, committee members and student). System developed for improved tracking of progress. New admin staff increasing involvement in tracking process so that faculty are notified as needed.
Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above	Fall 2010 research in progress to develop follow-up ANCSA course. Faculty involved with RD 693/493 begin work on changing this course to a permanent offering.	First audio conference graduate orientation held August 2011; new and continuing students attended. Graduate school process clearly explained. Thesis and project structures clarified.	Discussion under way to add a new 600 level RD course that will focus on the Legislative process in response to student interest. Also under consideration are ways to keep grads involved with the program after completion and how we can "grow our own" new faculty members.

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	<p>Upon completion of the program, graduates in RD will demonstrate leadership capacities for effective oral and written communication including use of best available computer hardware and software. They will use the network built up during their studies to connect with international and national issues and apply their knowledge across the Arctic.</p>	<p>Students will participate in the effective use of written and oral communication, demonstrating capacity through seminar presentations and coursework. Committee will provide support for writing of thesis or compilation of project Goal is assessed via completion of RD 698/699 thesis or project, faculty assessment of student presentations and comprehensive exam results.</p>	<p>Students will receive intensive instruction in effective oral and written communication, including use of computers, face-to-face seminars and web-based instruction throughout their program and will be provided with opportunities for networking.</p> <p>With the help of grant funding, students will make presentations at conferences and meetings including those in international locations.</p>

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RD MA Core Courses:

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RD F601--Political Economy of the Circumpolar North

RD F625--Community Development Strategies: Principles and Practices

RD F650--Community-Based Research Methods

RD F651--Management Strategies for Rural Development

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The RD Core Courses

RD F600--Circumpolar Indigenous Leadership Symposium

Course Description: Intensive face-to-face graduate seminar over a week-long period. Held every fall either in Fairbanks or Anchorage. This is a cornerstone course for all M.A. students in the program. The content focuses on indigenous leadership and includes presentations by practitioners from throughout Alaska and the circumpolar North. It also presents an orientation in depth to the graduate program. This course may be repeated once for elective credit. Prerequisites: Graduate standing or permission of instructor. Note: RD F600 is required of all graduate students in the Rural Development program.

Course Objectives:

- To build an integrated learning and career development community that includes new and continuing students and RD faculty and that can be sustained over time and distance.
- To explore individually and collectively the qualities of indigenous leadership in a demanding cross-cultural environment that enable rural community leaders to be effective in a highly dynamic world.
- To draw from the firsthand insights and wisdom of experienced leaders from indigenous and other rural communities in Alaska and beyond.
- To lay a foundation for successful completion of the RD Master's program through continued involvement in face-to-face seminars and the use of quality distance education modes of delivery (including web-based courses, audio conferences, televised courses, internships, mentorships, and applied community-based research projects).
- To learn about post-graduate opportunities in the RD program and to gain insights into areas such as the study of leadership, research, professional development, and self-understanding that will be useful at any academic level and in a wide variety of work settings.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students will have gained a familiarity with general leadership concepts, literature, and primary academic and general writers. They will be able to analyze effective leadership practices from the perspectives of distinguished Native elders and modern leaders. They will articulate a beginning definition of indigenous leadership and develop it into a sharpened working definition which takes into account academic perspectives and traditional and current examples provided by resident elders and guests.

They will be able to present a thoughtful analysis of personal leadership philosophy and goals. These outcomes are measured by prepared oral presentations, and active participation in face to face discussions as well as audio meetings and written assignments due throughout the course.

RD 600 meets the mandates of the DANSRD Mission and addresses the UAF Core Themes

RD F601--Political Economy of the Circumpolar North

Course Description: This course provides an overview of the interrelationships between rural communities and the circumpolar North, and global socioeconomic, political, and ecological systems. The course includes major theoretical positions in our understanding of modern development, using a comparative case-study approach to understand rapid socioeconomic change in the North. Development trends in the circumpolar North, and their potential future consequences, will be set within a historical context to enable an understanding of the processes that led to current conditions.

Course Objectives:

- To explore changing theoretical conceptions and applications of “development” in the global economy, with particular reference to discussion of sustainable development in the circumpolar north.
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RD F625--Community Development Strategies: Principles and Practices

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Course Objectives:

- Present information and tools that facilitate the planning and implementation of community development strategies.
- Encourage students to consider new and creative approaches to community development.

The class examines principles of community development; a framework for building community development strategies and plans; tools for analyzing data and population trends in rural Alaska and ways to identify and effectively access funding resources. The primary outcome expected from students in RD 625 is that they be able to apply these principles, strategies and tools, and demonstrate capacity to further develop and improve upon what they have learned in class. This outcome is measured via class assignments, the development of a comprehensive proposal and a final written paper supported by in-class oral presentations.

This course addresses key aspects of both the DANSRD Mission and all four UAF Core Themes.

RD F650--Community-Based Research Methods

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RD F651--Management Strategies for Rural Development

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