**Prospectus for Master of Marine Policy (MMP)**

**University of Alaska Fairbanks**

**A. Mission and Objectives**:

1. Clear statement of the nature and purposes of the change in the context of institutional mission and objectives.

The MMP, with its focus on developing graduates trained in the application of science and policy and
focused on the interface between living marine resources and the people and communities that rely on
them, aligns closely with the mission of UAF, Alaska’s Land, Sea, and Space Grant university. UAF aims to educate undergraduate students, graduate students, and lifelong learners, to create and disseminate new knowledge, to prepare Alaska's career, technical, and professional workforce, to connect to urban, rural, and Alaska Native communities by sharing knowledge and ways of knowing, and to engage Alaskans through outreach for continuing education and community and economic development. The objectives of the MMP also align with the mission of UAS, which aspires to serve the coastal environments, cultures, economies, and communities of Alaska through interdisciplinary education, workforce development, and scholarship, research, and creative activity.

The MMP program will advance goals set out in UAF’s Strategic Plan by
a. Modernizing the student experience through experiential education and civic engagement;
b. Preparing graduates to engage in a participatory approach to the development and analysis of public
policy affecting marine social-ecological systems;
c. Adding to UAF’s prominence as Alaska’s premier research enterprise in partnership with state and
federal agencies, industry, Alaska Native organizations, and civic groups;
d. Filling a gap in the suite of programs that combine to secure UAF’s leadership in the science that
underpins public policy that governs the management of circumpolar marine social-ecological
systems.

The MMP program will also advance goals set out in UAS’s Strategic Plan by
a. Creating a straightforward pathway for graduating seniors and current professionals to earn a
career-focused graduate degree.
b. Providing a pool of qualified Alaska-trained candidates to fill marine policy analyst positions in
state and federal resource management agencies, local government, tribes, and commercial and
non-commercial interest groups;
c. Engaging with local, regional, state, and national governments to explore the consequences and
ramifications of recognizing and facilitating the shared governance of living marine resources in
increasingly responsive and accessible ways that enhance individuals and communities' social,
economic, and environmental well-being.

**B. Authorization:**

The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) is one of four individually accredited universities within the University of Alaska system. UAF has been continuously accredited since 1934 by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

The Constitution of the State of Alaska establishes the University of Alaska as the state university, governed by a Board of Regents appointed by the governor. Alaska Statutes provide for a board of eleven voting members, including one student, with authority to carry out the mission of the university system and its constituent units, including the determination and regulation of the university’s course of instruction and the conferring of degrees. Members of the board have no contractual, employment, or financial interest in the university. The chair is elected from among the board. The board appoints the president of the university system, who in turn appoints the chancellor of UAF. Both officers are full-time employees whose only responsibility is to the institution

**C. Educational Offerings:**

1. **Descriptive information of the educational offering(s) including credits to completion, courses by title and assigned academic credit granted:**

The requirements and areas of concentration, with all applicable courses with title and credits, are
outlined in the CourseLeaf proposal. Due to the concentration options, there are far too many course options to list out here.

1. **Description of the method of instructional delivery (ie. Type of delivery, including percent of face-to-face, hybrid, distance delivery, and/or competency-based):**

The delivery mode for required and elective courses is 2.6% Face-to-face, 97.4% hybrid, and 0%
distance/asynchronous. Given that most course offerings will be available both in-person and distance (two-way synchronized delivery), greater than 50% of the program offerings could be taken via distance modality.

1. **Description of expected student learning outcomes:**

Anticipated student learning outcomes are outlined in the [Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan](https://uaf.edu/assessment-review/files/sloa/SLOAPlanTemplate12-13.docx) attached to the CourseLeaf proposal.

1. **Description of the assessment plan for student learning outcomes:**The [Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan](https://uaf.edu/assessment-review/files/sloa/SLOAPlanTemplate12-13.docx) is attached to the CourseLeaf proposal.
2. **Evidence of approval by the appropriate academic policy body of the institution:**

Senate signature page and BOR approval from the minutes will be provided by the Office of the Provost.

**D. Planning:**

1. **Plans and descriptive materials indicating evidence of need for the change and the student clientele to be served (common resources include** [**EMSI**](https://www.economicmodeling.com/) **and the** [**BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook**](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/)**):**

After discussions with agencies and other professional entities, faculty discovered that potential
employers view an MMP positively. This view is affirmed by the results of the organization survey
conducted by Brower Consulting Services. Although an MMP is not considered equal to an MS
degree, it was considered preferable to a Bachelor’s degree. To earn an MS degree, students must
generally complete independent research projects that take significant time and financial resources.
Most MS students in related programs are funded through their advisor’s external grants because of
the significant time commitment needed for independent research. The vicissitudes and rigor of
scientific research often delay student completion such that MS degrees often take over three years to complete. A non-thesis MMP provides an expedited opportunity for students who want an advanced understanding of marine science and policy to enter the professional workforce in positions that do not require them to undertake original scientific research.

1. **The procedures used in arriving at the decision to change:**

UAF and UAS faculty have had discussions with agencies and other professional entities to determine the need for a Master of Marine Policy. For specific comments, see our letters of support (Appendix 3). UAF CFOS and UAS SAS faculty have discussed the offering of this degree and have concluded that the interest, perception, and available resources are such that going forward is appropriate. In addition, UAS contracted with Brower Consulting Services to survey organizations, students, and alumni. The final report from that contact is included in Appendix 3. The report indicates strong student interest in the program and strong organizational interest in program graduates.

1. **Timetable for implementation:**

Because the minimum necessary facilities, faculty, and staff resources are already in place, it is
anticipated that the MMP degree program would begin the first fall semester following program
approval, perhaps as early as Fall 2022.

**E. Student Services:**

**1. Capacity of student services to accommodate the change:**

Students and prospective students in the UAF CFOS graduate programs are supported by an Academic Manager and a Recruitment Coordinator who will be ready to assist these new students administratively. An Advising Coordinator supports students and prospective students in the UAS Department of Business and Public Administration.

**2. Implications of the change for services to the rest of the student body:**

The student services staff named above have the capacity to serve the additional MMP students without impacting services to the rest of the student body.

**F. Provision for Physical Facilities and Equipment:**

Program needs for office and classroom space can be accommodated with existing physical facilities, and require no additional funding or provision.

**G. Adequacy and Availability of Library and Information Resources:**

Because the MMP program builds on existing courses and does not require a thesis, it is unlikely that support for this program will entail unique demand for specialized library resources.

**H. Faculty and Staff:**

**1. Analysis of faculty and staff resources needed, including educational and professional credentials, experience, and qualifications of faculty members relative to their individual teaching assignments:**

The MMP will be anchored by the Ted Stevens Distinguished Professor of Marine Policy, an endowed position established in the UAF CFOS by the Pollock Conservation Cooperative in 2000 and filled in 2006. However, even though the courses included in the proposed MMP are currently being offered within the UA System, at least two additional faculty positions, one FTE each in UAF CFOS and UAS SAS, are needed to ensure program resilience and sustainability. For example, UAS lacks current faculty expertise to support PADM S693—Environmental Economics, an elective in the MMP Economics, Development, and Sustainability core. In addition, several UAF Fisheries courses included in the MMP curriculum are only offered in alternate years because there are too few faculty to offer those courses more frequently.

**2. Anticipated sources or plans to secure qualified faculty and staff.**

In their discussion and approval of the program addition, the Board of Regents allocated the

$250,000 funding to fill these two new positions in the coming year; projected enrollments in

future years are expected to sustain the positions. The Resource commitment document within the uploaded proposal outlines the distribution of existing and new faculty committed from both institutions.

1. [**Completed Budget Worksheet**](https://nwccu.app.box.com/s/g4wo5rr04pgsx3ore2ipahgzwxr4unmk)