

The UAF Faculty Senate took the following action at Special Meeting #223 on April 24, 2017:

MOTION:

Discontinuation of the BA in Sociology

The UAF Faculty Senate observes:

- The department lost three faculty in 2016, and currently has one tenured faculty member and four active majors. These numbers are far too low for a sustainable program.
- The loss of three faculty in 2016 and the hiring freeze that prevented the department from being able to hire tenure track PhD sociologists have crippled the department.
- Recent changes to our bachelor's degree general education requirements mean that instead of choosing between SOC 100X and ANTH 100X, students can now choose from 27 possible courses.^{*} This substantially reduced the tuition dollars earned by the Sociology Department.
- The Sociology BS was suspended in 2014, but has not been discontinued; there is a possibility that the BS could be reinvigorated through collaborative relationships with UAA and UAS to offer a joint online BS degree.
- Other programs would be adversely impacted by this discontinuation, including: Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies; Justice BA; Psychology BA and BS; Alaska Native Studies; and CTC certificate and AAS degrees.
- UAF is a major research university and Sociology is a standard program at nearly all major universities. The MCAT now tests students on their sociological knowledge; UAF students who plan to enter medical school will thus be at a significant disadvantage if they are unable to take Sociology courses. Federal grants increasingly require applicants to include a social science component.

Faculty Senate recommends:

- Since a viable Sociology Department exists at UAA ^{**} and there are also three PhD sociologists affiliated with UAS,^{***} we should find a way to work together via online course sharing to allow interested Fairbanks students to earn Sociology degrees. A collaborative online degree in Sociology would serve as an excellent model of collaboration that other programs might adapt. A collaborative online program would allow students all across Alaska and beyond to benefit from a Sociology degree.

Therefore, the UAF Faculty Senate does not agree with the discontinuation of the BA in Sociology.

Rationale: The cost savings will be minimal as only one tenure track faculty is employed. Collaboration with UAA and UAS through distance education should be explored for continuing the program, which is consistent with Strategic Pathways objectives for making the three universities collaborate.

(Signatures attached)

*Link to: <http://catalog.uaf.edu/bachelors/general-education-requirements/>

**Link to: <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-arts-and-sciences/departments/sociology/>

***Link to: http://www.uas.alaska.edu/arts_sciences/socsci/disciplines/sociology.html

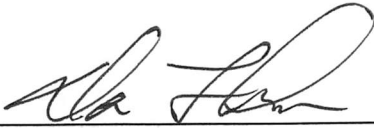


2017-04-25

President, UAF Faculty Senate

The Chancellor Approves

Disapproves



Chancellor

Date: 5/4/2017