Outcomes Assessment Ideas

There are two questions in program and outcomes assessment: is the degree program meeting professional or academic expectations, and are the students in the degree program meeting program expectations?

The curriculum of the AA program is the UAF baccalaureate core. The purpose of the core program as stated in the UAF catalog is:

*Through the baccalaureate core experience, every UAF student is expected to achieve:*

- **multidimensional competency in written and oral English—**including comprehension of complex materials and creation of clearly organized presentations of soundly reasoned thought in both oral and written form;
- **a solid grasp of quantitative reasoning and mathematical application;**
- **an intellectual comfort with the sciences—**including the scientific method, frameworks that have nurtured scientific thought, traditions of human inquiry and the impact of technology on the world's ecosystems;
- **an appreciation of cultural diversity and its implications for individual and group values, aesthetics and social and political institutions;**
- **an understanding of global economic interdependence, sense of historical consciousness and a more critical comprehension of literature and the arts;**
- **a better understanding of one's own values, other value systems and relationships between value systems and life choices.**

For the purposes of the AA program we can assume that the successful completion of the core curriculum will result in the expected academic achievement.

Since the AA program degree requirements mirror the UAF baccalaureate core the AA programs curriculum outcomes assessment will be the core outcomes assessment.

The Core program has an outcomes assessment process that is described at [http://www.uaf.edu/provost/outcomes/CoreAssessment.html](http://www.uaf.edu/provost/outcomes/CoreAssessment.html). There is a core review committee of the academic senate. I have been appointed as a member of that core review committee. By participating in the core outcome assessment process I will be able to include the needs of the AA students in the Core outcomes assessment.

In addition to curricular outcomes assessment, the AA degree should focused on whether the students are succeeding in the core curriculum and whether students are transferring from the AA program to BA and BS degrees.

To help focus our efforts on outcomes assessment I want to describe what I mean by student success or failure.
What does success and failure mean in the Associate of Arts program?

Student success:

- A student finishes the AA degree, graduates, and becomes a student in a four year BA or BS degree.
- A student makes an AA degree plan to meet personal and professional goals, fulfills that plan, and graduates.
- A student starts the AA program and decides to transfer to an AAS degree.
- A student starts the AA degree, gets admitted into a four year degree program, does not graduate with an AA degree, but graduates with a BA or BS degree.
- A student starts the AA program and transfers to another college or university.
- A student takes courses, on a regular basis, to work slowly toward an AA degree.

Student failure

- A student starts the AA program and drops out because of poor academic performance.
- A student drops out of the AA program because of financial aid difficulty.
- A student does not take the appropriate developmental education courses to prepare for their academic courses.
- A student takes courses that are not useful to their personal or professional interest or their intended BA or BS degree.

What information do I get on a regular basis about AA students?

- We get a list of students admitted into the program
- We get freshmen low grade reports
- We get copies of degree audits
- We get copies of graduation credit checks
- We get an approval list for students preparing to graduate

Information that I can get from Banner and UA Online

- Individual student records
- Advising transcripts
Tools that we can use to help advise AA students

- Academic planning tools such as degree checklists and academic planning tools
- Organized student records
- Banner and UA Online research

Questions for evaluating the outcome of the AA program should include:

- Are students succeeding in the baccalaureate core curriculum?
- Are students transferring from the AA degree to BA or BS degrees?
- Are students taking the appropriate courses to transfer to specific BA or BS degrees?
- Are students achieving their stated academic goals?
- If students are leaving the AA program are they transferring to other AAS degrees?

The methods that the AA program will use for outcomes assessment are:

- Institutional research tracking AA program enrollment information
- Academic planning information developed through advising contacts
- Keeping and reviewing AA student records that will be kept at the TVC student Assistance Center.

Specific Outcomes Assessment Plan

The student outcomes assessment for the AA program should be based on what the AA program is doing. The AA program provides advising support and academic planning services to our students. For student learning outcomes, as distinct from the core program, I want to evaluate the effectiveness of our advising and support to the AA students. The specific student outcomes that I would want to measure are how well are the students understanding and using the AA program. The evidence for student learning would be the specific learning plans that students develop and whether the plans are actually implemented.

Specific things that we will monitor are:

- Have students met with an AA program advisor?
- Have students developed a specific academic plan using the AA advising checklist?
- Has the academic plan been followed?
- Has the plan resulted in the expected goal?
In order to implement the outcomes assessment we will do the following things:

- Contact each new admission into the AA program with a letter describing the purposes of the AA program and offering to work with the students to create an individualized academic plan.
- Create a web site with advising materials to support the creation of an academic plan.
- Create an advising file for each student who takes advantage of our offer of creating an academic plan.
- Compare the academic plan with the student degree audits.
- On a semester basis, analyze the academic plans for completion and problems. We will especially look for areas of problems or difficulties that the students share in common and look for ways to improve the process or to provide supplemental services to the students to increase their success in the AA program.