

Wildlife Biology and Conservation - Bachelor of Science - Mid-Cycle Review & SLOA Year

Current Compliance Year: 2022-2023

Mid-Cycle review

Recent Recommendations

Feedback will include recommendations from the last Expedited Review or from your most recent review by your school or college. You may not see any feedback or recommendations until you have completed your first full or mid-cycle review.

Response to Previous Recommendations (if any):

N/A

Student Learning Outcomes

The previous Student Learning Outcomes Assessment has been submitted as its own report. Going forward you will use the following prompts to discuss the success of your most recent SLOA plan and address your assessment activities since your last SLOA report (typically the past two years or since your last program review).

Learning outcomes feedback from last review:

Feedback will be provided once you have completed a full or mid-cycle review.

Discuss your SLOA findings, changes you are making and what you hope to see as a result:

Our most recent SLOA Plan (2016) assessed whether objectives/outcomes were achieved through relatively qualitative, subjective, and uninformative procedures. For example, “time to completion of the curriculum”, whether students were “introduced to practical skills”, and “pass/fail rates for capstone projects” were our primary criteria under our past SLOA Plan.

Based on recent bi-monthly discussions among faculty within the Wildlife Biology and Conservation Program (hereafter Wildlife Program), we concluded that our intended objectives/outcomes are not comprehensive, and the data our Program is collecting insufficient data to quantitatively assess and evaluate whether student learning outcomes are being met. Therefore, we have updated our SLOA Plan in several ways (summarized below).

- 1) We have included additional objectives/outcomes to cover knowledge (understanding of wildlife science fundamentals and principles), technical skills (data collection and analysis), and communication (written, oral, collaborative).
- 2) We have created a new capstone course (WLF470) that will implement a field test that is similar to an ETS Major Field Test but is modified to assess the Wildlife Program’s specific learning objectives and outcomes. A similar test will be administered in our entry-level courses (WLF101, WLF104) to serve as a baseline of knowledge for incoming Wildlife Program students.
- 3) We are assessing communication (written, oral, visual, auditory) using projects in WLF322 and WLF470. One course (WLF322) focuses on written (research paper or proposal) and oral communication (series of speed talks), and the other (WLF470) focuses on written (Topic Review) and visual (short video production) or audio (podcast audio production) communication.

Discuss the curricular changes made based on assessing your SLO. If you haven't made any curricular changes, please explain why not and address what you did notice in the review, including strengths of your curriculum through the assessment of your outcomes:

We made several changes to the Wildlife Biology and Conservation BS curriculum. The number of faculty in the Wildlife Program has declined by 50% since 2014. As a result, fewer WLF course options are available to students, and completing the degree in four years has become more challenging. The reduced offerings also have hindered our Program's ability to meet minimum national standards for the education and experience of wildlife professionals set by The Wildlife Society. Therefore, we rearranged the frequency of course offerings to streamline curriculum paths, added more flexibility within course category options to help students meet major requirements by giving students more alternatives, modified existing courses to reduce redundancies, integrated important content from lost courses into remaining courses, increased the number of synchronous and asynchronous offerings, and added new courses to help our program evolve with a rapidly changing field. For example, WLF470 (Human Dimensions of Wildlife) was added as the Program capstone. Some of these changes have occurred in the last 2-3 years, but most will be seen in the 2023-2024 catalog. Currently, we do not have permanent instructors for important core courses (WLF101, Intro to Wildlife Science; BIO425, Mammalogy). Finding graduate students and adjunct faculty to teach critical courses each year is not sustainable and impedes student learning outcomes. We need to rehire some lost positions and return the Program to a reasonable capacity.

Are communication outcomes embedded in the SLOA Plan?

As of 2017 all Baccalaureate programs were required to embed the communication outcomes within their SLOA Plans, this is optional for non-Baccalaureate programs.

Embedded

Student Success

To access the Student Success Dashboard please sign into a UA computer with VPN connection (if not on campus). You will need your UA credentials and it is best accessed with the most updated version of Chrome, Edge, Firefox or Safari browsers; Internet Explorer is not supported. You will need to filter the data to see your programs. If you need assistance in finding the data for your programs, please contact your data liaison or [Julia Manfredini](#) in the PAIR office.

Data Liaisons

Each school or college has a team of Data Liaisons to help you analyze the data provided in the portal and may be able to help you see your data in multiple contexts. You can find a list of data liaisons on the resources page for Program Review.

The college or school level committee will also have access to this data with the goal that by providing these visualizations data availability will be increased.

Data supplied within the dashboard linked below is intended for Academic Program Review and not for any other purpose.

[Student Success Data Dashboard](#)

Previous Feedback

Feedback will be provided once you have completed a full or mid-cycle review.

Student Success Data Trends:

Increase in majors, No change in degrees awarded, Decline in persistence, No change in SCH
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If equity gaps were found in any of your disaggregated student success data, please explain how you plan to address those gaps. Please contact your data liaison or make an appointment with [Julia Manfredini](#) to learn more about analyzing your data.

Equity gaps

Note that the data provided do not allow us to disaggregate among the six-degree programs offered by the department (BIOS B.A., B.S., M.S., Ph.D.; Wildlife B.S., M.S.).

There was a small increase in the proportion of majors reporting as [REDACTED] between 2018 (11.3%) and 2022 (14.3%). The percentage of degrees awarded to [REDACTED] students also rose during this interval, from 4.9% in 2018 to 10.5% in 2022, a positive development. However, these numbers also show that, for [REDACTED] students, the proportion of degree recipients lagged behind the proportion of majors. In contrast, [REDACTED] students made up 62.8% of majors and received 63.2% of degrees.

[REDACTED] continued to dominate the pool of majors and degree recipients within the department, as they have for many years. In 2022, [REDACTED] constituted 69.0% of majors and received 69.5% of degrees. In contrast, [REDACTED] constituted 60.2% of majors and 58.3% of degrees in 2022 across CNSM as a whole.

Optional Data Explanation

Feel free to share more of your thoughts on the data provided.

When assessing student success trends, it may be prudent to account for faculty numbers within the Program, and potentially contract workload. We currently have five wildlife faculty: defined as faculty that advise undergraduate WLF majors, teach WLF-designated courses, and supervise WLF graduate students. Dividing the number of majors and degrees by the number of Program faculty members may provide useful insight into Program performance and productivity.
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High Impact Practices

According to the AAC&U, High-Impact Educational Practices “have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial to college students from many backgrounds.” UAF is particularly interested in Undergraduate Research and/or Scholarly Activity because it is one of our mission fulfillment indicators, but all of these researched High-Impact Educational Practices should be reflected in your program’s student learning outcomes and curriculum.

Previous Feedback

Feedback will be provided once you have completed a full or mid-cycle review.

High-Impact Practices Used in this Program

Please use the following fields to discuss how your program is using the high-impact practices, successes and known issues and solutions, or ways you are considering incorporating them in the future. If you are not using any of the high-impact practices listed, please use the “Other or None of These,” field to share what your program is doing to help students be successful.

High Impact Practices that currently apply to your program:

Undergraduate Research, Collaborative Assignments and Projects, Diversity/Global Learning, Writing-Intensive Courses, Internships, Capstone Courses and Projects

Other or None of these (explain)

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Submission

Submitter & Collaborator Names

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College or School Review Committee

The college or school committees set the tone for helping each program feel seen during this process. We have provided you with strength-based feedback tags to attach to this program review. Please select as many as applicable.

Overall Recommendations

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Explanation of Recommendations

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Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (tags)

Missing a direct measure,Missing curricular connection,Missing collaboration in department
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Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (narrative)

The program makes meaningful changes in the SLOAs as a result of previous recommendations and department discussions, including adding a capstone course, adding additional objectives and integrating oral and written communication goals into specific courses. However, the program has made curricular changes due to a loss of faculty but not a result of outcomes assessment. In general, the program might consider revising the assessment criteria and procedures to include more “insightful” scales instead of “pass courses” and to attach the standard rubric. Also the program might consider revising the practicums to describe how it can be used as assessment for technical skills. Rather than describing what the faculty will be teaching, or what the students will receive, a direct learning outcome should describe what knowledge or abilities the student will gain as a result of being in the program, and how that will be measured.
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Profile Feedback

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Financial Feedback

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Student Success & Equity Feedback

The program thoughtfully addresses equity gaps. The program recognizes that enrollment and graduates for [REDACTED] students increase, but they are less successful in degree completion than other races. There seems to exist a gender gap that is comparable to college as a whole. At the program level, we see that enrollment decreased in 2020 but increased by 30 in 2022 and that degrees basically held steady. This response is for the department level. Data can be disaggregated at the program level, which would add more specificity to your report. The Accreditation and Assessment Office will follow up to walk you through the process.

High-Impact Practices Feedback

The committee applauds the way that the program selected 5 HIPs and supported each with descriptions. It is especially noteworthy that the program adds implicit bias training in one of the courses, as the program recognizes that the students do not reflect the demographic makeup of the university as a whole.
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UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan
Wildlife Biology and Conservation, BS
 College of Natural Science and Mathematics
 November 2022

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose	Intended Objectives/Outcomes	Assessment Criteria and Procedures	Implementation (what, when, who)
MISSION STATEMENT: The Wildlife Biology and Conservation BS degree program provides the fundamental education and training required to understand and apply the principles, methods, and tools of wildlife research, management, and conservation. The program is designed for students interested wildlife ecology that seek careers in the wildlife profession (private, state, and federal, tribal, and NGO organizations). The Program provides graduates with the qualifications necessary for certification as a wildlife biologist by The Wildlife Society . The curriculum also lays a solid foundation for	Knowledge Graduates should demonstrate a breadth and depth of knowledge of wildlife ecology that includes an understanding of the structure, function, and interactions of wildlife organisms, communities, populations, and ecosystems. They also will be able to apply their knowledge to research and manage wildlife and the diverse interactions among wildlife, people, and the environment.	• Pass courses required for the major and take the capstone course WLF 470 (Human Dimensions of Wildlife Management). • Score adequate or better on a wildlife professional field test. • Eligibility to apply to become a Certified Wildlife Biologist under the TWS certification program.	• WLF 470 (Human Dimensions of Wildlife Management) will administer a field test specifically designed for wildlife professionals. The field test also will be administered in entry-level courses (WLF101 and WLF104) to serve as the baseline for comparison and to assess learning. • The Program curriculum will maintain course options that meet the TWS certification requirements.
	Communication Graduates in wildlife biology should be able to effectively communicate their knowledge on application of the fundamentals of wildlife ecology including the principles and techniques of wildlife research and management.	• In communication intensive and capstone courses (WLF322, WLF470), student communication projects (written, oral, visual, audio) will be evaluated using a standard rubric and will score "adequate" or better.	• Students will take ≥ 2 wildlife courses that are communication intensive • Students may also present or publish independent undergraduate research (e.g., URSA) that they are involved in.

Submitted by: Todd Brinkman

advanced graduate study. GOAL STATEMENT: Graduates of the wildlife program will have received the education and training in the art and science of applying the principles of ecology to the conservation and management of wildlife and its habitats. Graduates will be judged able to represent the profession as an ethical practitioner. Graduates will be prepared to achieve their future educational and professional goals.	They should be able to make cogent scientific arguments for specialist audiences in the sciences but should also be able to present their arguments and evidence to general audiences.	• Undergraduate student research communication products will be recorded and archived	
	Technical Skills (quantitative, methodological) Graduates should be able to apply modern methods and quantitative approaches to examine questions pertaining to wildlife ecology and the monitoring and managing of wildlife populations. They should be able to recognize an appropriate method or a particular task and have the competence to recognize bias in data collection. They should be able to summarize and analyze data using a variety of statistical approaches and create visual displays of information that effectively interpret and convey data.	•Wildlife students that take the GREs will place above the 50th percentile in the analytical portion of the exam •Wildlife students will score adequate or better on the analytical portion of the wildlife field test •Students will demonstrate ability to analyze, visualize, and interpret data in their capstone research project by scoring adequate or better on all quantitative aspects of the capstone evaluation.	Faculty teaching quantitative (WLF301, WLF421), methodological (WLF322, WLF469), and capstone courses (WLF470) will mentor students and implement evaluations. For example, WLF322 implements two practicums during the semester that requires students to demonstrate expertise in the application of methods they have learned.