

Interdisciplinary Studies - Doctor of Philosophy - Full Review & SLOA

Current Compliance Year: 2022-2023

Full 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):

The program was reviewed in AY 20-21. We appreciate the recognition of the review committee of the value of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program in terms of its need, connection of diverse faculty, rigor of admissions, level of satisfaction, efficiency of operation and administration, and novelty of research. We appreciate the perceived lack of cohesion and the lack of systematic program assessment. The potential for the program to contribute to the number of PhD graduates is significant. Since the expedited review we have worked to make the admissions process more robust and to streamline the process. The Interdisciplinary Studies Council is now composed of faculty members, one from each college and school, rather than a group of faculty from a subset of schools. Working with the council we have established formal rubrics for evaluation of admissions. In response to student and applicant concerns, we have updated the website (<https://www.uaf.edu/gradschool/interdisciplinary/index.php>), to clarify both the scope of the program as well as the admissions process. Prospective applicants have an appointment with the graduate school director to discuss their goals, assist in connecting with potential advisors, and address any concerns. Previously these appointments were conducted with a staff member at the office. We have reviewed the SLOA but not yet implemented a formal program of review. To improve student cohesion in the program, we have discussed establishing a required course in Interdisciplinary Studies for graduate students in the program with faculty but have not yet established a curriculum or course for the students.

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:

We have not yet formally collected SLOA data in this time. We have focused our efforts on the admissions process. While the graduate school oversees the admissions and the students' general

progress, there is no systematic or comprehensive assessment of the program and its outcomes. Student outcomes are assessed in their “home departments”, but there is not an overall assessment process for the entire program. Student Learning Outcomes Assessments have been developed but have not been implemented. Tracking interdisciplinary students is challenging, and the graduate school has yet to implement an in-house database that combines unique data points with data from the institutional Banner-based database.

Guidance from the review committee would be appreciated.

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:

Currently no curricular mandates, except for general UAF requirements and 18+18. No obvious changes planned. Model after RAP program. How do off-the-shelf INDS get created as "non-shadow" disciplinary degrees - issues in accreditation. Provide a framework.

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:

Equity gaps

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.

In 2021 the percentage of [REDACTED] students in the program was 14% relative to 10% for other PhD programs. That percentage has remained steady, even as the Indigenous Studies program has grown. However,, the number of students in the program has steadily declined from 71 in 2018 to 44 in 2022 (This is the combination of Interdisciplinary and Engineering Interdisciplinary). Persistence levels appear similar across race and ethnicity of the students.

Optional Data Explanation

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

n/a

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:

First-Year Seminars and Experiences, Undergraduate Research

Collaborative Assignments & Projects

Undergraduate Research

Diversity/Global Learning

ePortfolios

First Year-Seminars & Experiences

--

Writing-Intensive Courses

--

Service-Learning and/or Community-based Learning

--

Internships

--

Capstone Courses & Projects

--

Other or None of these (explain)

--

Program Profile and Financial Data

The program review elements in this section usually stay consistent for departments. Any responses you provide will be saved for your next visit. So, when it's time for the next program submission, your previous narrative profile answers will be here, ready for editing. You can then decide if any updates are necessary, based on your needs for the next program review cycle.

Financial Data Resources

The Board of Regents shapes program review, through BOR Policy 10.06, to support budget increase advocacy in the state legislature. The standardized financial data template should be analyzed with your data liaison to assess your program's capacity and resource status.

To keep integrity and remain standard across all of UAF it is very important that you do not provide any additional or alternative data.

Financial Template

Your data liaison may have uploaded your template to the Google folder for this program, or you may do so now.

Previous Feedback

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

Cost Effectiveness

How does your department/program approach being cost effective?

The program is piggy-backed on the disciplinary programs and hence the costs are low. Classes are offered by disciplinary programs and the tuition revenues returned to those units. The Interdisciplinary Council is served by faculty as part of their service requirement. The management by the graduate school is the only direct cost.
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Program's Value to Mission

The program allows students to pursue PhDs in Alaska that would not otherwise be available to them. The program supports students working across the UA system who work with faculty with diverse disciplinary expertise from UAF, UAA and UAS. The program supports the UAF missions in Education, Research, Prepare, Connect and Engage;

Educate:

Ed4. Mentor or guide graduate students to master a subject area or advance knowledge.

Research:

R5. Conduct and disseminate basic and applied research.

R6. Exhibit and perform in creative arts.

R7. Engage graduate and baccalaureate students in research, scholarship, and creative activity.

R8. Collect, preserve, and provide access to intellectual, cultural, and natural history collections.

Prepare:

P9. Prepare students for the professional, career, and technical workforce.

Connect:

C12. Alaska Native knowledge and ways of knowing are integrated C13. Document and share Alaska Native and rural cultural and historical information.

Engage:

En14. Partner with Alaska communities on issues of mutual interest.

En15. Communicate research-based knowledge.

En17. Collaborate with individuals, businesses, and agencies to diversify and grow local and state economies.

Duplicative Programs

n/a

Community or Other Partnerships

Students pursuing Interdisciplinary degrees work with faculty having both Institute and College appointments, work with faculty at UAA and UAS, and engage in community-based research with Alaska Native and non-Native communities.

Value of Service Courses (Optional)

n/a

Post-Graduate Success

We do not provide career counseling. We are working with career services to establish programming where graduate alumni give seminars to graduate students and share their career paths. In 2021 we conducted a survey of graduates who reported general satisfaction with their post-graduate professional placements.

Submission

Submitter & Collaborator Names

Richard Collins

Submitter Email

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

Increase enrollment,Strengthen advising practices,Increase retention/persistence

Explanation of Recommendations

The INDS Ph.D. program is vital to UAF. It allows students to integrate multiple disciplines into a doctoral level research agenda. It serves the UAF vision to pursue "innovative research." It is also a low cost program. It is recommended that the Graduate School, INDS Council, and faculty advisors continue to ensure that the students are pursuing interdisciplinary (opposed to disciplinary or multidisciplinary) academic and research programs. For interdisciplinary degrees, it is suggested that there be an additional Student Learning Outcome focused on the synthesis across the disciplines that comprise the student's degree. As long as the Graduate School continues to manage the INDS Ph.D. program, it should collect data to assess its SLOAs. This should include collecting information from students at multiple points in their doctoral education, along with information from the students' committee members and, possibly, the departments/disciplines/programs that comprise the student GSP.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (tags)

Missing a direct measure,Missing collaboration in department

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (narrative)

SLOA plans from 2010 and 2021 were included. The most recent SLOA plan (2021) comprises 4 objectives/outcomes. Objective/Outcome 1, which states, "Students entering the PhD program can communicate at a graduate level and identify an interdisciplinary topic," is not a Student Learning Outcome of the program. Rather, it is an (important) indicator for the admissions process. Objectives/Outcomes 2-4 are potentially strong indicators of the learning objectives per the mission statement. The Graduate School reports that it has not started collecting data to inform the 2021 SLOAs. Notably, INDS is a challenging program to assess given that after the Graduate School and INDS Ph.D. Council accept students, the students are "housed" in diverse departments and programs across the campus. It is recommended that The Graduate School and INDS Council work closely with departments and programs "housing" the INDS Ph.D. students to collect data and assess the extent to which the program is achieving its SLOAs.

Profile Feedback

Program is mission-centric to UAF or college/school,Program is unique in the state

Financial Feedback

Operates at Low Cost,Productive Faculty

Student Success & Equity Feedback

Per the data, and on all measures (majors, SCH, and degrees), the INDS Ph.D. program's (Interdisciplinary Studies) numbers decreased over the period (2018 to 2022). Majors dropped from 66 in 2018 to 41 in 2022. Average annual SCH load decreased from 8.2 in 2018 to 7.5 in 2022. The number of degrees dropped from 9 in 2018 to 2 in 2022. The Graduation-Informed Persistence remained fairly stable: 96% in AY18 to 89.5% in AY22. Demographic information is only available at the aggregate for all Graduate School programs; thus, we were unable to assess the demographic breakdown for the INDS and Interdisciplinary Engineering Ph.D. programs. The program does note that 14% of the INDS Ph.D. program's students self-identify as being [REDACTED], compared to 10% in other Ph.D. programs.

High-Impact Practices Feedback

The report indicates that first-year seminars and experiences and undergraduate research are high-impact factors for the Ph.D. program. As these indicators are related to undergraduate education, the committee is confused by their inclusion as high impact practices.

Dean's Review Feedback

I thank the review committee for their constructive review of the Interdisciplinary PhD program. The graduate school will review their recommendations and develop a plan to adopt them as appropriate.

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan
Interdisciplinary Ph.D.
 Graduate School and Interdisciplinary Studies
 August 2021

MISSION STATEMENT: The graduate interdisciplinary PhD program responds to increasing societal needs for research that addresses complex problems and supports students in conducting multidisciplinary (drawing on multiple disciplines), interdisciplinary (investigating the interactions between multiple disciplines), and/or transdisciplinary (engaging stakeholders outside the university as collaborators) research and scholarship. The program supports students to develop and execute an individual program of study that meets their needs and goals. The program also supports students to pursue research and scholarship in areas where degrees are not offered by existing programs at UAF. The graduate interdisciplinary program is administered by the graduate school and supported by UAF faculty and departments.

GOAL STATEMENT: To prepare students to conduct independent and original research that addresses complex problems and meets their intellectual and professional goals.

Intended Objectives/Outcomes	Assessment Criteria and Procedures	Implementation (what, when, who)
Students entering the PhD program can communicate at a graduate level and identify an interdisciplinary topic.	Application includes a statement of academic goals, research prospectus, graduate study plan, and letters of endorsement.	Interdisciplinary studies council review the application for quality of research plan, study plan, and interdisciplinarity of research. Council vote on acceptance.
Established students will acquire mastery of concepts and state of knowledge in their chosen disciplines and understand interactions between these disciplines that define their subject area.	Established students will pass a written and oral comprehensive exam testing the interdisciplinary knowledge related to their subject.	The graduate advisory committee will administer the comprehensive exam. Typically in the third year of study.
Students will make original and substantial contributions to knowledge in their field of study, which will be communicated in oral and written form	Students will write a dissertation, publicly present the work, and defend their thesis in an exam setting. Students will publish their work and submit grant proposals as appropriate.	Graduate advisory committee will evaluate the students work on an annual basis; Department and graduate school will monitor student progress on an annual basis. Students report annually about papers published, presentations given, and any proposals submitted.
Students will obtain employment in their chosen fields, advance within their existing employment, or otherwise meet personal objectives for completing the degree.	Professional activities of graduates will be tracked.	Graduate school will survey and track graduates, and compile and review information on a semi-annual basis.

Fiscal Report for Graduate School				Definitions for the compiling staff	Definitions for the programs and reviewing committees
	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022		
Total Student Credit Hours (SCH)				Provided in SCH tab in the student success data provided by PAIR.	Total Student Credit Hours delivered in courses/subject codes attributable to the program/department. Comes from the data dashboard.
Service SCH				Sum rows labeled as "In unit, outside department, Service" and "Outside unit, Service" in the SCH tab of the data provided by PAIR.	Sum of rows labeled as "In unit, outside department, Service" and "Outside unit, Service" in the SCH table of the data provided by PAIR
Department FTEs	4	3.9	3.87	FTE = Full-time equivalent employee. Use the worksheet below to calculate for each employee type, and then use the total here.	FTE = Full-time equivalent employee. Fiscal staff have used the worksheet below to calculate for each employee type in this program/department's staffing.
Total SCH per Department FTE	0	0	0		Total SCH divided by employee FTE for the year. May give insight into departmental productivity scaled to the size of the unit.
Service SCH per Department FTE	0	0	0		Service SCH divided by employee FTE for the year. May give insight into departmental productivity scaled to the size of the unit.
Majors in Programs	13	13	13	Sum for all programs from the Majors Total tab in the data provided by PAIR.	Total majors in the program (or all programs in the department), in the Majors table of the data provided by PAIR.
Department FTEs	4	3.9	3.87	From total row in FTE table below or row 5 above	FTE = Full-time equivalent employee. Fiscal staff have used the worksheet below to calculate for each employee type in this program/department's staffing.
Majors per Department FTE	3.25	3.33	3.36		Total majors divided by employee FTE for the year. May give insight into departmental productivity scaled to the size of the unit.
Total Unrestricted Expenditures				Total Expenditures made from budgets with an F1 or F7 fund type designation, from provided cycle report data filtered by Data Liaison	
Total Restricted Expenditures				Total Expenditures made from budgets with revenue of the F2 or S2 fund type designation, from provided cycle report data filtered by Data Liaison	
Total Unit/Central Support Allocated to Program(s)				Expenses incurred for direct support of instruction within orgs identified as central or academic support, if applicable	
Tuition Revenue				Receipts to college from tuition generated by the department/program (F1). NOTE: under the current 80/20 percent tuition distribution model generating units receive 80%. PLEASE USE PAIR REPORTED SCH TO REPLACE ZEROES IN CELL CALCULATIONS.	Receipts to college from tuition generated by the department/program, based on the campus's active tuition distribution model, which determines how much the unit receives of their generated tuition, and how much the campus keeps (in addition to the out-of-state surcharges) to support central offices/functions. The current distribution model is 80/20, where the unit/college receives 80% of their generated in-state tuition.
State Appropriation Revenue				Appropriations for current funds operation of the university from the general fund of the State of Alaska through the annual budget cycle. This category also includes TVEP and State Mental Health Trust funds, if allocated to the department. (F1)	Appropriations for current funds operation of the university from the general fund of the State of Alaska through the annual budget cycle.
Restricted/Sponsored Project Revenue Fees				Revenue from external sponsors; includes grants, contracts, sponsored projects & restricted (grant) accounts funded by UA Foundation funds (F2/S2)	Revenue from external sponsors; includes grants, contracts, sponsored projects & restricted (grant) accounts funded by UA Foundation funds
Other UA Receipts/Revenue				Course Fees (9159) e.g. Performance and Sales Receipts, Space Rental Revenue, Indirect Cost Recovery (F1/F7); NOTE: COURSE FEES (9159) REPORTED ABOVE	
Workload allocation: Teaching Units	0	0	0	0 Department faculty's workload units assigned to teaching	
Workload allocation: Service Units	0	0	0	0 Department faculty's workload units assigned to service	
Workload allocation: Research Units	0	0	0	0 Department faculty's workload units assigned to research	

Full-time Equivalent Worksheet**	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	
Faculty FTEs	0	0	0	Base assumption: 12-month full-time = 1.0 FTE. 9-month = 0.75 FTE. Split appointments are multiplied by the % of effort assigned to this department. Part-time are multiplied by the % of effort assigned. F9 faculty on sabbatical count as 67% of one 9-month 0.75 FTE (or 0.50 FTE).
Executive FTEs		0.9	0.87	
Adjunct FTEs	0	0	0	Base assumption: 40 units/credits = 1.0 FTE. Total # of credits taught by adjuncts in a year divided by 40 = the FTE of adjuncts in that year.
Staff FTEs	4	3	3	Base assumption: 12-month full-time = 1.0 FTE. 9-month = 0.75 FTE. Split appointments are multiplied by the % of effort assigned to this department. Part-time are multiplied by the % of effort.
Graduate TA/RA FTEs	0	0	0	Base assumption: 40 hours/week for 12 months = 1.0 FTE. 9-month = 0.75 FTE.
Total Departmental FTEs	4	3.9	3.87	Sum of all employee FTEs

**Note: FTE definitions and calculations for the purpose of Academic Program Review are different than for other institutional reporting processes (e.g. OMB or IPEDS reporting)

