

Fisheries - Bachelor of Arts

Current Compliance Year: 2023-2024

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):

Overall, there was not a strong trend in enrollment over the last 5 years despite our efforts to increase enrollment. This contrasts with the BS program, which has seen a steady increase since 2019, and we note that several students have changed their majors to the BS program after starting in the BA program. Enrollment in the Fisheries BA program increased from 13 in both FY 2019 and 2020 to 17 in 2021 and 2022. The increase may have been due to a combination of recruitment efforts prior to the COVID pandemic and possibly some students deciding to go back to school during the pandemic. Enrollment subsequently decreased to 14 in 2023, for unknown reasons. These trends may have been affected by the loss of several faculty leading up to and during the review period. We continue to track enrollment, retention and completion in the program as summarized below. No major changes to the curriculum were made, but some changes have been made in the timing of courses. In part to address these changes, faculty and staff have worked on revising the roadmap for the BA to ensure that students entering the program continue to have a clear path to graduation within 4 years.

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:

The current assessment is based on three students graduating during the review period. SLOs were assessed based on instructor evaluations for an introductory (F110) and upper-division human-dimensions course (F411). Students are assessed in 'Writing', 'Verbal', 'Critical Thinking', and "Interdisciplinary Knowledge" in these specific courses, as well as overall based on 'early' and 'late' collective instructor assessments, using scores ranging from 1 (seriously deficient) over 5 (competent/average) to 10 (strong) compared to typical entry-level professionals or incoming graduate students. All students showed substantial improvement in each area between the early and late period (by 1-5 points). Similarly, all students showed an improvement in scores from FISH 110 to FISH 411 (average: +2.2) with the largest improvements (by 3-5 points) for the lowest-scoring student in FISH 110. Evaluation of employment performance based on a mandatory internship suggests that all three students were rated as 'competent' with scores averaging 4.8. Two students completed exit interviews. Both were "very satisfied" with their overall experience at CFOS and perceived their skills as either

‘Strong’ (3 and 5 out of 6, respectively) or ‘Sufficient’. Unfortunately, no one-year post-graduation survey interviews were returned. All three students obtained professional employment within a year of graduating. All SLOA goals were met. Program Learning Outcomes were considered “strong” during the last review and there is high variability across relatively few students. Therefore we do not see a need or have a solid rationale for modifying the SLOA plan at this point.

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:

In response to the assessment of our student learning outcomes, we added some asynchronous course options to meet the needs of our undergraduate students, some of whom are attending classes remotely and/or outside of regular hours to accommodate their work and childcare schedules. To meet general requests for data analytical courses across Fisheries programs, and to better prepare students for a professional career in fisheries, a new course on ‘Data Visualization in Fisheries’ (FISH F435/635) was added in 2021. No additional changes were made as there has been limited recent feedback from students. The two students who responded to exit interview requests were ‘very satisfied’ and provided generally positive feedback and satisfaction with CFOS courses. Enrollment has increased some and we will increase efforts to gather data specific to the BA Fisheries program to better assess needs and outcomes for students in the program. In particular, exit and one-year post-graduation surveys have provided valuable data for the BS program and more survey data from BA students could be very informative.

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: (please indicate the trends that apply to your program)

No change in majors, Decline in SCH, No change in persistence, Decrease in pass rates, 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.

While we flagged some possible equity gaps, sample sizes are too small when parsed by group to draw reliable conclusions. Moreover, trends for the BA program cannot always be separated from the BS program. For example, pass rates were pooled for BA and BS students, and while they did show a decline overall, this seems to be true across the board by gender, ethnicity, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. Patterns by race and age are difficult to interpret because of high variability due to small sample sizes.

Graduate-informed persistence rates of BA students were lower than in the other programs in most years. Socio-economic statistics are not parsed between BA and BS students, but the BA is a less traditional kind of fisheries program and may attract more non-traditional students who have more work-life-school demands than traditional BS students. This is something we should keep an eye on. Specific to the BA program, average SCH declined from ~20 to ~15 (unlike in other Fisheries programs, which are more stable). Given the short time frame and the low number of BA students, it's hard to conclude that this is an actual trend, but we should keep an eye on it in the future.

Overall, the declining pass rate is concerning, but is not unique to the BA program. We hypothesize that this is still a fallout of the COVID pandemic.

Optional Data Explanation

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

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:

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

Collaborative Assignments & Projects

Undergraduate Research

Many of our UG students work with Graduate students or faculty on research projects. Feedback from Exit interviews suggests that these opportunities are highly valued. We are beginning to better track these experiences, but relevant summary statistics are not yet available at this time.

Diversity/Global Learning

The Tamamta Program in Fisheries is a graduate program designed to uplift indigenous voices in fisheries and has provided opportunities for undergraduate students to engage with graduate students and faculty in dialogues about racial equity and indigenizing fisheries in Alaska. Instructors have incorporated indigenous perspectives in more of our Fisheries courses and continue to do so. We currently do not have specific goals with respect to Diversity/Global Learning in our SLOAs but will be considering relevant goals and how to measure and implement them.

ePortfolios

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First-Year Seminars & Experiences

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Writing-Intensive Courses

The program includes many writing-intensive courses such as Fisheries Management (FISH 487) or Human Dimensions of Environmental Systems (FISH 411) and writing skills are tracked via instructor assessments in our SLOAs as summarized above.

Service-Learning and/or Community-based Learning

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Internships

Required internships are an essential part of SLOA to evaluate whether BA students are adequately prepared for a career in fisheries.

Capstone Courses & Projects

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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

Increase enrollment, Consider curricular revisions

Explanation of Recommendations

Many of the comments for the Fisheries BA and Fisheries and Marine Science BS are the same because, outside of the student success data, the program reviews were nearly identical. SLOA plans are very similar or identical for the undergraduate programs (3 out of 4 SLOs were identical). It is essential that different programs have different outcomes - if students are intended to learn the same things, how are the programs differentiated? Something to resolve, per some of the guidance below, for the full-cycle review in two years.

The review panel acknowledges the time and effort that went into preparing the mid-cycle program review for the Fisheries BA program. The review panel appreciates that the program has made curricular changes to address student needs and provided a thorough overview of the data trends (student success data) and narrative for the HIPs (high-impact practices). The review panel would also like to emphasize the need, per the expedited program review, for enrollment growth for the Fisheries BA for the full program review in two years.

Learning Outcomes Feedback

Requires Minor Revision

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (tags)

Strong alignment with SLOA plan, "Clear, concise presentation of findings"

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (narrative)

The program provided 4 SLOs for the Fisheries and Marine Sciences BA SLOA plan. The review panel offers the following recommendations to improve upon the program's SLOAs:

- SLO #s1-3 were appropriate as measures of student learning.
- SLO # 4 is program outcomes and not tied to student learning.
- The recommendation from the review panel is to reduce the number of SLOs from 4 to 3 by eliminating SLO #4. The program is encouraged to retain this measure of outcome assessment (#4) for their own internal tracking purposes (just not use it as part of program review). Post-graduation activities, such as graduate school/job placement, are not considered an assessment of student learning and are instead program outcomes. Per guidance from the NWCCU for accreditation purposes, they recommend that degree programs have between 3-5 SLOs per program (so the 3 remaining SLOs would meet that requirement).
- A 4th or 5th SLO could be added that directly assesses student learning from the degree program. The program might consider revising the outcomes to include more "action" words. It is difficult to assess things like "understand" or "recognize." "Identify", "explain", or "analyze" are clearer outcomes to assess. <https://tips.uark.edu/blooms-taxonomy-verb-chart/>.

The program provided an assessment plan for collecting data as well as a process to evaluate the SLOs. Some of the data/artifacts were provided. The program should also include assessment instruments and the mentor evaluation form as artifacts for future program reviews.

Noted curricular changes which included adding asynchronous courses to meet the needs of undergraduate students, some of whom are attending classes remotely outside of Alaska.

Following NWCCU guidance, SLOA plans must emphasize "closing the loop" and continuous improvement, ensuring each SLO within the plan is assessed individually to verify alignment with program objectives. If a SLO fails to produce the expected assessment outcome, adjustments to SLO language, substantial changes to the SLO, or revisions to data collection rubrics are necessary to ensure alignment and facilitate program improvement.

Student Success & Equity Feedback

The program noted from the expedited program review (EPR 2019-20) that the program was flagged due to low enrollment; while enrollments did improve, they recently declined for this program. The review panel would like to know what from the EPR plan was addressed in the response from 2022 and how that has been incorporated into the plan for this program to address the concern with declining enrollment.

The program discussed curricular changes as needed and how those were derived from the program review process as well as an overview of the SLO; noted no change in majors (13 to 14) and GIP (66.7 to 68.8%), a decline in SCH (20 to 15.19) and pass rates (95.56 to 87.33%), and equity gaps; did not address degrees awarded (flat at 2); noted that small sample sizes make it difficult to identify trends (plus data tied to FMS BS).

The review panel feels that it would be beneficial to see how the program intends to address any declines in student success metrics.

High-Impact Practices Feedback

The program identified writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments/projects, diversity/global learning, internships, and capstone courses/projects, and UG research as HIPs. A narrative was provided for each HIP, but it was not clear where these HIPs fit into the program or if all students are required to complete them to meet graduation requirements.

The diversity/global learning HIP tag did not seem applicable to the program as described in the narrative.

Even though FISH 102 Fact or Fishin': Case Studies in Fisheries and Marine Sciences is a first-year seminar, this tag was not highlighted and there was no discussion of this HIP (will need to be resolved for the full program review in two years).

The review panel recommends including examples to demonstrate/highlight each HIP. For example, what are examples of capstone course projects?

What percentage of students participate in each HIP for those that are optional?

The review panel recognizes that the HIPs employed by the Fisheries program are all positive and meaningful in preparing students to enter the workforce.

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan
B.A. Fisheries
 College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences
 May 2021

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose	Intended Objectives/Outcomes	Assessment Criteria and Procedures	Implementation (what, when, who)
CFOS MISSION: The College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences supports the needs of Alaska and its communities, the nation and the international community through research and training the next generation of scholars and leaders in the wise use of Alaskan and Arctic aquatic natural resources. CFOS VISION: As one of the largest combined research and academic organizations in the University of Alaska system in terms of personnel and budget, and one of the most diverse colleges in both geographic reach and academic mission, we seek to be a: -World-class ocean and inland aquatic research and educational organization, recognized as such by peers in the academic community and funding agencies. -Primary source of knowledge, operational expertise, and basic and applied research to manage freshwater, estuarine and ocean resources in Alaska, including the Arctic. -Source of well-trained and highly motivated graduates to staff organizations and agencies, in particular those in Alaska responsible for management of Alaskan and Arctic waters and their renewable resources. -College of choice for faculty and students with interest in waters off Alaska, including the Arctic, and their renewable resources. -Trusted steward of state and national research and educational facilities.	Develop strong critical thinking and oral and written communication skills.	Assessment of critical thinking, oral and written communication skills in FISH 110, FISH 411 and FISH 490 courses, and upon graduation. Goal: majority of students show progress during the course of their degree Goal: majority of junior and senior students meet or exceed entry-level professional standards. Goal: all of our graduating students will meet or exceed entry-level professional standards.	Assessment instrument to evaluate students at the completion of courses FISH 110 and 411 (annually, fall semester, 110/411 instructors) Mentor evaluation form for FISH 490 (annually, 490 instructor) Faculty assessment of students (annually, Department Chair + faculty of required FISH courses in BA program)
	Demonstrate interdisciplinary knowledge of fishery systems	Assessment of knowledge of fisheries systems in FISH 110, FISH 411 and FISH 490 courses, and upon graduation. Goal: majority of students show progress during the course of their degree. Goal: all of our graduating students will meet or exceed entry-level professional standards.	Assessment instrument to evaluate students at the completion of courses FISH 110 and 411 (annually, fall semester, 110/411 instructors) Faculty assessment of students (annually, Department Chair + faculty of required FISH courses in BA program)
	Develop entry-level employment skills through experiential learning.	Assessment of skills upon completion of experiential learning/internship program and graduation. Goal: majority of students will meet or exceed entry-level professional standards upon completion of their required internship	Mentor evaluation form for FISH 490 (annually, 490 instructor)
	Prepare to compete successfully for admission to graduate programs or entry-level career positions in fisheries or their chosen fields	Assess employment goals and success rates Goal: of those B.A. Fisheries graduates who are seeking admission to graduate school or employment in a fisheries or their chosen field, majority will succeed within one year of trying.	Exit interviews and one-year follow-up. (annually, Academic Programs staff)

Submitted by: