Information Technology Specialist - Certificate

Current Compliance Year: 2024-2025
Full review

Resources

Before completing this form:

- Review the resources available to assist you.
- The link in WorkZone directs you to your program's folder for this year's review, which includes:
  - A full copy of your previous report with the SLOA of record attached.
  - A folder with previous SLOAs as individual documents.
- The Resources folder contains:
  - Templates for creating or updating SLOAs.
  - Training materials from the SLOA and Program Review Training held in August.
- Additional tools and information can be found on the Academic Program Review Website.

If you have questions or concerns during this process, please reach out to mailto:uaf-accreditation@alaska.edu

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.

No overall feedback was provided during your last review. No response is necessary.

Response to Previous Recommendations (if any):

No previous recommendations are available to respond to.

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:
Strong alignment with SLOA plan

The committee does have a question and wonders if the score sheets used for the hands on scenario and portfolio tasks work are similar to a consistently used rubric? It would be helpful to include them next time.

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

Each year, the program collects data through its ITS Certification Review process. For this Certificate program, this process consists of a hands-on scenario that students complete during the semester they apply for graduation. Faculty evaluate student performance using an evaluation checklist.

Copies of the hands-on scenario and evaluation checklist have been uploaded to the program review folder for this review. This information has been provided to help reviewers better understand the relationship between the scenario and the evaluation checklist.

Since COVID and the program's transition to 100 percent online delivery, the hands-on scenario has been adapted to enable all tasks to be performed remotely. This adaptation required changes in the process used to evaluate student performance. Students now create documentation of each configuration task rather than faculty sitting at the student's system to verify configuration tasks. If a student improperly documents a configuration, faculty cannot determine whether the error is a configuration error or a documentation error. This is important because a configuration error points to a weakness in student learning related to a specific technology area. In contrast, a documentation error points to a weakness in professional practices.

As we've analyzed our data related to the hands-on scenario, we have discovered the current process used to evaluate student performance is lacking, and are working to address this issue.

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:

No curriculum changes have been made based on the assessment of our SLO. Students continue to demonstrate competency through their hands-on scenarios in the key skills valued by entry-level IT employers. As we address the deficiencies identified in our hands-on scenario evaluation process, we expect to be able to collect more granular data, which will allow us to identify weaknesses and necessary changes at the course level.

Supporting Documents

Please ensure that all relevant supporting documents, such as artifacts, rubrics, and student data, are uploaded to your designated Google folder in WorkZone or directly into Google Drive. *Note: Do not include any information that may identify students in your data.*

Updated SLOA?

If you are updating your SLOA document, please include it with your report and other supporting documents in your designated folder. It does not need to be filed separately in the "SLOA" folder.

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. Please mark the appropriate box below.

Embedded:	
Not Embedded:	X

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

The committee feels it would be interesting to see discussion on how the program plans to address equity gaps and finds it confusing to see that the program plans to address equity gaps but also states there are not any identified. It would be helpful to see some discussion of the tags regarding student success that you have chosen. The program identifies one challenge regarding low degrees awarded within the certificate program; stating that it is because students do not pay graduation fees for both the Certificate and AAS; is there some way that the program could solve this problem?

Student Success Data Trends:

Trend	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Persistence	X		
Pass Rates	X		
Student Credit Hours			X
Majors	X		
Degrees Awarded			X
Other Trends (Explain in narrative below)			

Equity Gaps

Please discuss any equity gaps identified in your disaggregated student success data and explain how you plan to address them. Please contact your data liaison or make an appointment with Julia Manfredini to learn more about analyzing your data.

The student population for the program is too small to provide enough data to determine if an Equity Gap exists within the program. There is no baseline for comparison, and from the data provided, no equity gap is evident.

Optional Data Explanation

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

Comparing the data provided for the percentage of women within the program to the percentage of [redacted] working within the industry it is clear that the program has a higher percentage of [redacted] students when compared to the percentage working in industry. Our program maintains an average of 30 percent [redacted] while the industry has a 27 percent employment rate.

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

The committee recognizes that hands-on learning is a positive high-impact practice. The capstone course and project is another. These intentional activities support students being ready to enter the workforce as well as the AAS level program.

High-Impact Practices Used in this Program

Please select all high-impact practices your program is currently using from the list below. For any practices you select, provide details in the corresponding narrative section. In the narrative, discuss how your program is implementing these practices, including any successes, known issues, and solutions. If you are considering incorporating any of these practices in the future, share your plans. If your program is not using any of the listed high-impact practices, please use the 'Other or None of These' field to explain how your program supports student success.

Capstone Courses & Projects		Research (Graduate Level)	
Collaborative Assignments & Projects		Writing-Intensive Courses	
Diversity/Global Learning		Publications	
ePortfolios		Communications	
First-Year Seminars & Experiences		Publications	
Internships		Scholarly Activities	
Service or Community-based Learning		Other (Please describe in box below)	**X**
Undergraduate Research			

Collaborative Assignments & Projects

N/A

Undergraduate Research

N/A

Diversity/Global Learning

N/A

ePortfolios

N/A

First Year-Seminars & Experiences

N/A

Writing-Intensive Courses

N/A

Service-Learning and/or Community-based Learning

N/A

Internships

N/A

Capstone Courses & Projects

N/A

Other or None of these (explain)

Hands-on Learning is the primary high-impact practice used within the IT Specialist program. Through the Certificate program students complete nearly 500 hours of hands-on learning related to implementing, configuring, and troubleshooting; client and server operating systems, network, security, and cloud computing systems. The program delivers these hands-on activities through its virtual lab environment (NETLAB+) and software simulation (Cisco Packet Tracer and TestOut Hands-on Technology Courseware). This practice is essential for students to understand how to apply the knowledge, theory, and concepts students are taught throughout the program.

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 review. Please carefully review the information below and make any corrections or updates as needed to ensure accuracy for the next program review cycle. If any sections are incomplete, please ensure that you provide the necessary information. This will allow you to start from an updated baseline when you revisit these elements in future submissions.

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 Financial Feedback

Feedback will be provided once you have completed a full review.

Previous Profile Feedback

Feedback will be provided once you have completed a full review.

Cost Effectiveness (250 Word Limit)

How does your department/program approach being cost effective?

In FY24, the program's Total Unrestricted Expenditures were [redacted]. It generated [redacted] in tuition and fees and received [redacted] in state appropriation revenue, which resulted in [redacted] in total revenue. The program's approach to being cost-effective is focused on a strategy that maximizes tuition and fee revenue through strategic scheduling. These strategies are implemented by scheduling courses required for degree completion based on an advising roadmap and creating advising plans with students that align with this roadmap. This strategy results in predictable course enrollment that produces strong tuition revenue while minimizing instructional costs. The program also maintains a course fee structure that enables it to maintain the equipment necessary to provide students with a quality learning environment. The program's advising roadmap and course fee structure are reviewed regularly and adjusted when necessary to remain cost-effective.

Program's Value to Mission (250 Word Limit)

The IT Specialist program provides value to UAF's mission by preparing students for technical and professional careers in the field of information technology. The primary focus of our faculty is to disseminate knowledge through teaching and advising. We teach students knowledge and skills that are current, relevant, and valued by IT employers. Many of our students are non-traditional. We carefully advise and guide those students, sometimes through multiple developmental courses, towards student success. We regularly educate vocational rehabilitation students by teaching them the skills necessary to re-enter the workforce. These students often require special advising to assist them in transitioning to the academic environment. Also, many of our students are veterans facing a similar challenge.

Duplicative Programs (250 Word Limit)

The IT Specialist program at UAF is approved as a statewide program that is offered fully online. Our program serves students located in Fairbanks, throughout the State of Alaska, and across the Lower 48. The majority of students who graduate from our program find employment in their local community.

UAA offers a similar program that prepares students for employment in information technology. UAA's program primarily offers in-person classes that serve the Anchorage and Matsu area. UAS offers technology classes but not a certificate or degree program in information technology.

Community or Other Partnerships (250 Word Limit)

Our faculty maintain contact with leaders in industry and business information technology departments many of which have taken our classes. Our relationships with the numerous OIT departments at the University are especially close and many of our students hold internships there and in the community. Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, Fairbanks Native Association, and Alaska Department of Transportation are a few of the industry partners that hire our graduates and provide essential program feedback.

Value of Service Courses (Optional) (250 Word Limit)

N/A

Post-Graduate Success (250 Word Limit)

Since shifting the program 100 percent online. Tracking post-graduate success (employment) has proven to be difficult. The program has been working to develop strategies to assist in the tracking of

this data, such as having all students create a LinkedIn profile in their CITS F281 Professional Practices class; however, this area continues to be a struggle.

Submission

Submitter & Collaborator Names

Mel Denning & Keith Swarner

Submitter Email

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UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
2024-25 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan
Information Technology Specialist, Certificate
Community and Technical College

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose	Intended Outcome / Objectives	Assessment Criteria and Procedures	Implementation (Who What When)
MISSION STATEMENT: Teach students the essential skills required to effectively use and troubleshoot computers and computer applications. **GOAL STATEMENT:** Students earning the IT Specialist Certificate will develop foundation-level support skills that will prepare them for entry-level IT positions and to continue their education in the IT Specialist A.A.S. degree program.	1. ITS Certificate graduates will have foundation-level technical skills to provide entry-level support and troubleshooting in the following areas: • Operating Systems • Hardware • Networking • Troubleshooting 2. Students will have the communication, computation, and human relations skills required of an entry-level IT support professional.	Students must successfully complete the following certificate-level ITS Certification Review requirements: • Perform a hands-on scenario task to demonstrate proficiency in the foundation-level technical skills required to effectively support and troubleshoot computers and information technology systems. Performance on the hands-on scenario will be evaluated using a completion checklist of configurations required within the hands-on scenario task. Communication skills will be assessed by evaluating documentation developed during the completion of the student's hands-on scenario. Computation skills will be assessed by evaluating computation-related tasks required for the hands-on scenario. Human relation skills will be assessed by evaluating student responses to questions asked during the student's completion of the hands-on scenario.	What: Completed score sheets for portfolio tasks and hands-on scenario task completion checklists for each student being evaluated. When: Every spring semester. Who: ITS Faculty

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 (tags)

Address Equity Gap		Consider Curricular Revisions	
Develop Online Offerings/Options		Improve Time to Degree	
Increase Enrollment		Increase Graduates	
Increase retention/persistence		Strengthen Advising Practices	
May be asked to share Effective Practices		Recommendation to University-Wide Committee	

Explanation of Overall Recommendations (narrative)

The IT Specialist Certificate Program has demonstrated strengths in hands-on, high-impact learning and maintaining a higher percentage of [redacted] students compared to industry averages. The hands-on industry-aligned learning is outstanding. The program's emphasis on 500+ hours of hands-on virtual lab simulation work in configuring, troubleshooting, and securing IT systems is a strength. This aligns with employer expectations and ensures students gain job-ready skills. We appreciate the cost-effectiveness and strategic enrollment management. Your strategic scheduling such as aligning courses with advising roadmaps maximizes tuition revenue while minimizing instructional costs. The program shows strong fiscal responsibility and maintains a balanced budget. There is strong mission alignment such as focusing on non-traditional students, [redacted], and those needing developmental support and this serves the college mission to prepare students for technical careers and support workforce re-entry. Transitioning to a 100% online, statewide program expands access to students across Alaska and beyond, fulfilling an important need both in Alaska and worldwide. We suggest tracking graduates more closely and consider partnering with the career services to integrate alumni surveys. Another recommendation is collecting more data for various populations to assist in knowing underrepresented groups.

Student Learning Outcomes Feedback (tags)

Strong	X	Developing	
Requires Minor Revision		Requires Major Revision	

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (tags)

Strong Alignment with SLOA Plan	X	Clear, Concise Presentation of Findings	X
Compelling Learning Story	X	Missing a Direct Measure	
Missing Active Verbs	X	Missing Curricular Connection	
Missing Collaboration within Department			

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (narrative)

The committee appreciates your sharing of the rubrics and data sets. We acknowledge your work on improving the rubric for your assessment of the hands-on evaluation. The committee suggested developing a dual-assessment rubric that separately evaluates technical competency and professional documentation skills. We also recommend the use of active verbs describing objectives.

Student Success & Equity Feedback (narrative)

The program's 30% [redacted] enrollment exceeds the industry average of 27%, reflecting intentional efforts to attract underrepresented groups. More data for various populations will assist in knowing underrepresented groups.

High-Impact Practices Feedback (narrative)

The committee commends your efforts to use effective hands on learning and authentic assessment. We understand faculty are enhancing the hands-on assessment to distinguish between configuration errors and documentation errors in remote assessments.

Profile Feedback

Mission-Centric to College and/or UAF	X	Unique within UA	X
Collaborative with other UA Programs	X	Provides Job Placement for Graduates	
Strong Post-Grad Success for Students		Strong Service Teaching Component	X
Strong Ties to Community or Industry	X		

Financial Feedback

High Tuition Revenues		High Grant Revenues	
Operates at Low Cost	X	Productive Faculty	X
Opportunities to Increase Revenue		Low Enrollment	