Interdisciplinary Studies - Master of Science

Current Compliance Year: 2024-2025
Mid-Cycle 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 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.

Consider curricular revisions

The committee suggests revision of the SLOA and potential curricular changes that make clear distinctions between an M.A. and an MS. INDS degree.

Response to Previous Recommendations (if any):

The choice of whether a student pursues an MS or MA is determined by their primary advisor and graduate committee. For example, a student completed an Interdisciplinary MS in Geoscience and Communication worked on applied science communication. They used remote sensing data to characterize ice field distributions in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and developed a communication plan to communicate these findings and their environmental impact to resource managers. The SLOAs have been revised (see folder). The first major objective/outcome is now; "Students will acquire mastery of concepts and state of knowledge in their chosen disciplines and understand interdisciplinary interactions between these disciplines that define their subject area". This outcome will be evaluated using a "INDS SLOA Assessment" form (see folder).

A “INDS SLOA Assessment” form has been developed for distribution to graduate committees for evaluation of the Interdisciplinarity of the students work at the written and oral comprehensive examinations and the thesis/project defense examination.

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:

Missing collaboration in department,Missing curricular connection

The assessments seem to focus on learning objectives 4 and 5.

Assessment relies heavily on comprehensive exams and thesis completion.

Regarding SLO 1, 2, & 3 the committee is wondering if these are appropriate goals for all students.

Regarding SLO 4, the committee finds it reasonable to assess knowledge of research needs and standards through a thesis. However, it is not clear how this would apply to students completing a project. The committee is wondering if all INDS master's students are required to take at least one research methods course in their home department, and if it is part of the comprehensive exam

Regarding SLO 5, the committee agrees that written and oral communication should be key learning outcome for graduate students. The committee is suggesting that this goal be focused more on academic, discipline specific written and oral communication.

It would seem appropriate to add a content knowledge SLO, which could be assessed through comprehensive exams in the home departments. In addition, for interdisciplinary degrees, it would also be important to add a learning outcome focusing on the synthesis between the disciplines comprising the student's degree. This facette could be reviewed by the INDS council.

The program's priority should be to reevaluate SLOs and to collect data on their SLOA.

The committee noted that there is no difference in the student learning outcomes and the SLOA plan between the MA. and the M.S. and recommends that the program consider how to differentiate between the two degree options

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

We have revised the SLOAs based on the feedback in 2022. We have removed this first SLOA. The new SLOAs have not yet been implemented. We will distribute them to all committee chairs in this academic year and begin collecting the data this academic year.

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:

There are no formal curricular changes to be reported. As an individual interdisciplinary program, the curriculum for each student is determined by their graduate committee and

reported in their graduate study plan. Students choose a program with courses from multiple disciplines/departments.

Students submit a proposed graduate study plan with their application. The proposed graduate study plan is reviewed and students are admitted to the program with requirements for their graduate study plan including any research methods and or curricular courses based on that review.

In Fall 2024 the admissions process was revised with the use of formal rubrics to evaluate the student applications and provide more consistency in the evaluation of the applications.

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:	x
Not 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
The M.S. serves a very small number of students.

During the review period, the number of majors fluctuated between 1 and 5 and they had one graduate.

Student Success Data Trends:

Trend	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Persistence			X
Pass Rates			
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.**

There are eight students in the program. The persistence rate is 100% since 2022 across all categories (age, ethnicity, first-gen, gender, pell-grant, race).
No pass rate data was reported. Graduates show no gaps in age, first-gen, gender and age. The three graduates have identified as [redacted] over the reporting period, while 25% of the majors identify as [redacted] The program will check in with advisors confirm student progress.

Optional Data Explanation

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

(250 Word Limit)

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

Program did not identify any HIPs.

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)	X

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

Collaborative Assignments & Projects

(250 Word Limit)

Undergraduate Research

(250 Word Limit)

Diversity/Global Learning

(250 Word Limit)

ePortfolios

(250 Word Limit)

First Year-Seminars & Experiences

(250 Word Limit)

Writing-Intensive Courses

(250 Word Limit)

Service-Learning and/or Community-based Learning

(250 Word Limit)

Internships

(250 Word Limit)

Capstone Courses & Projects

(250 Word Limit)

Other or None of these (explain)

The number of majors has increased from 4 in 2022 to 8 in 2024.

Students conduct graduate level research and are actively engaged in collaborative research with Alaskan communities. Three of the students are engaged in the Tamamta program.

One student noted on their report of advisory committee that they had published a peer-reviewed publication and made a presentation of their work.

Over FY 2022, 2023, and 2024 there have been two MS graduates (one in CEM and one in CLA).

The program remains small, providing an option for occasional students to pursue an MS degree that is focused on their unique Interdisciplinary interests.

The program is small. Given the diversity and breadth of several established Masters degrees that are Interdisciplinary in nature (e.g., Arctic & Northern Studies, Indigenous Studies, Natural Resources, Rural Development) the INDS program encourages students where possible to pursue their studies through an established MS program.

Program Profile and Financial Data

The following feedback was received during your last full program review. **You are not required to respond to this feedback, but we encourage you to review it as it may provide valuable insights.** This feedback will also be available when your program undergoes its next full review in two years.

Previous Financial Feedback

Operates at Low Cost

Previous Profile Feedback

Program is unique in the state,Collaborative with other UA programs

Submission

Submitter & Collaborator Names

Richard Collins

Submitter Email

rlcollins@alaska.edu

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan

Interdisciplinary M.S.

Graduate School and Interdisciplinary Studies

November 2024

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 will acquire mastery of concepts and state of knowledge in their chosen disciplines and understand interactions between these disciplines that define their subject area.	Students will complete multi-disciplinary set of courses identified by their graduate committee. Students will pass a written/oral comprehensive exam, that tests the interdisciplinary knowledge related to their subject developed and administered by their graduate advisory committee	The student and committee develop a graduate study plan with a multi-disciplinary set of courses. Courses must be completed with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater. The graduate advisory committee administer the comprehensive exam. Committee complete evaluation using INDS SLOA assessment form.
Students will make contributions to knowledge in their field of study, which will be communicated in oral and written form.	Students will complete graduate level coursework and conduct guided research. Students will write a thesis/project, publicly present the work, and defend their thesis/project in a public exam setting. Students will present/publish their work.	Graduate advisory committee evaluate and report the students work on an annual basis. Department and graduate school will monitor student progress on an annual basis. The graduate advisory committee administer the thesis/project defense exam. Committee complete evaluation using INDS SLOA assessment form. Students report papers published, and presentations given on an annual basis.

Students will obtain employment in their	Longitudinal tracking information is	The students' initial placement is

chosen fields, advance within their existing employment, continue education in PhD or professional program, or otherwise meet personal objectives for completing the degree.	collected from each graduate of the MA program to determine their initial placement following graduation.	recorded on the INDS SLOA assessment form. If student is not employed/enrolled upon graduation, the student will be contacted within 1 year after graduation to determine initial placement.