



Academic Program Review

Program Name: Marine Studies - Master of Marine Studies

Academic Year 2025/2026

Recent Recommendations

Using your most recent review, please respond to all feedback and recommendations.

The reviews were very positive and asked us to increase enrollment and include rubrics as part of our SLOA. As mentioned in the SLOA, the rubrics are part of the capstone MBI 606, which has not yet been taught. It will be taught for the first time this coming spring. The rubrics are therefore not fully developed yet, but we included a current draft. The program has not completed the first student cohort, so it is difficult to make any assessments at this time other than we recruited our first student cohort in Fall 2024, and added additional students this fall. We have worked with ecampus who are now advertising the program on their webpage. We increased enrollment, currently 6 students in the program, and had a lot of student interest, but ran into the issue that some students may not be adequately prepared to take graduate level marine science classes. As a way to address this, we recommended these students take one or two graduate level marine sciences classes as non-degree seeking students; classes can later be applied to the program if applicable. This will help the students to evaluate if they feel prepared and the faculty to ensure student success in the program.

Student Learning Outcomes

Describe the assessment of your student learning outcomes (SLOs). Discuss your findings, changes you are making, and what you hope to see as a result.

Response:

Our first student cohort is just now taking their comprehensive exams including proposal presentations, so we don't have data to evaluate our SLOA yet. However, students appear to be doing very well in their classes thus far.

Did you make any curricular changes based on your most recent SLOA? If so, discuss what changes were made. If no changes were made, please discuss the strengths of your curriculum based on the assessment of your outcomes.

Response:

No, we will re-evaluate once the first cohort is graduating

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

Communication outcomes in the SLOA plan are: **Not Embedded**

Check the checkbox to certify completion of the following tasks:

☒ Upload supporting documents to the Supporting Documents folder. This includes artifacts, rubrics, and other documents related to your SLOA.

☒ Upload your most recent SLOA to the Supporting Documents folder, even if no changes have been made since the last review.

Have changes been made to your SLOA document since your last review?

If so, please summarize what changes were made.

Response: **No**

NA

High Impact Practices

Please indicate which high impact practices are currently being implemented in relation to the program's student learning outcomes.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☒ Capstone Courses & Projects | ☒ Graduate Level Research |
| ☒ Collaborative Assignments & Projects | ☒ Writing-Intensive Courses |
| ☐ Diversity/Global Learning | ☒ Publications |
| ☐ ePortfolios | ☒ Communications |
| ☐ First-Year Seminars and Experiences | ☒ Scholarly Activities |
| ☐ Internships | ☐ Studios |
| ☐ Service or Community-Based Learning | ☐ Practicum |
| ☐ Undergraduate Research | ☒ Other |
| ☐ Labs | ☐ None of these |

Discuss how the HIPs in the program are reflected in the SLOA. If you have identified HIPs that are not included in the SLOA, please consider an update.

Response:

Students in this program are required to complete and present on a project. These projects can span anything from a literature review to photo journalism, but have to be aquatic environment focused. As part of the capstone experience (MBI 606) students will work collaboratively on assignments, projects, and reviews, including project descriptions and syntheses.

Student Success

Please reference the [Resources tab](#) for information on accessing the Student Success Data Dashboard and contacting your designated data liaisons.

Student Success Data Trends

Persistence:	Increase
Pass Rates:	No Change
Student Credit Hours:	Increase
Majors:	Increase
Degrees Awarded:	No Change

Other Trends (if applicable):

. We don't have the data to evaluate these trends, but we increased our enrollment from zero to currently 6 students in the program. We expect that with the advertisement through ecampus, interest will be high, leading to steady enrollment numbers.

Achievement Disparities

Discuss any achievement disparities identified in your disaggregated student success data and explain how you plan to address them.

Response:

NA

Closing the Loop

Please discuss how your student learning outcomes are reflected in high impact practices and student success data.

Response:

Students in this program are required to complete and present on a project. These projects can span anything from a literature review to photo journalism, but have to be aquatic environment focused. As part of the capstone experience (MBI 606) students will work collaboratively on assignments, projects, and reviews, including project descriptions and syntheses. Some of the projects could well lead to publications, and at least one of our current students has been presenting [REDACTED] results to a co-management group and is also presenting at the [REDACTED] in January 2026.

Academic Program Profile

The following questions help show how your program supports the university's mission, connects with other UA programs, engages with the community, contributes through service courses, and supports student success after graduation. Please use this section to highlight the value your program brings to students, the university, and beyond.

UAF's Mission:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is a Land, Sea, and Space Grant university and an international center for research, education, and the arts, emphasizing the circumpolar North and its diverse peoples. UAF integrates teaching, research, and public service as it educates students for active citizenship and prepares them for lifelong learning and careers.

In what ways does your program advance UAF's mission?

Response:

Alaska's marine ecosystems are the focal point of our research and education endeavors. We emphasize field work and high-latitude research with relevance to stakeholders. It is our goal, and one of our SLOA to prepare our students for the job market, especially in Alaska.

How is your program related to others in the UA system?

Response:

By its nature, our program is intertwined with other CFOS undergraduate and graduate programs (i.e., Fisheries, Oceanography). Marine Biology faculty and students are taking an especially large part in the BS in Fisheries and Marine Sciences by teaching classes (or being a teaching assistant) as well as undergraduate mentorship. Our program is also commonly collaborating and interacting with the UAF Department of Biology and Wildlife, the UAF Veterinary Medicine Program, the UAA Department of Biological Sciences, and the UAS Department of Natural Sciences. We also commonly see students from these programs attending our classes.

Who are your key community or external partners?

Response:

The nature of our research focus partners us first and foremost with subsistence-users around Alaska. We work closely with tribal councils and NGOs (e.g., North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management), the Alaska Stranding Network, State agencies (e.g., Alaska Department of Fish and Game), as well as federal collaborators, e.g., the USFWS, USGS, NOAA/NMFS.

What role do your services courses play, if any?

Response:

While we do not have any "service courses", our mission and research relies on open, two-way communication with Alaska's stakeholders and our partners. We involve our students and their research in outreach opportunities and take part in many management and co-management meetings relating to Alaska's marine resources.

How do your graduates succeed after leaving the program?

Response:

NA, no data

Submitter and Collaborator Names:

Lara Horstmann

Submitter Email:

lahorstmann@alaska.edu

Committee Review

Program Name: Marine Studies - Master of Marine Studies

Academic Year 2025/2026

Overall Recommendations

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

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Insufficient Narratives | ☐ Report Incomplete |
| ☐ Address Achievement 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

Response:

This is a new program that accepted its first cohort of 6 students in the last year of the review cycle. Therefore, SLOs cannot be completed at present and student success rates or equity gaps cannot be assessed. The strength of the program is that it can leverage a wide range of existing courses and research opportunities across three CFOS departments (as well as in Statistics, Biology, and Wildlife) to support the program without the need for many new courses with the exception of a Marine Studies Capstone Project Seminar, making the program very cost effective. The SLOs are appropriate and fairly well developed, but SLOs 3&4 could be strengthened as noted. HIPs include 'Publications', but that is presumably not an expectation for the MMS.

Student Learning Outcomes Feedback

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Strong | ☒ Developing |
| ☐ Requires Minor Revision | ☐ Requires Major Revision |

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback

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

SLOA Feedback Narrative:

The program is still developing and requires time for the first cohort to graduate. Therefore, the APR is lacking data.

We recommend switching to positive language in all of the SLOs (i.e., "should be able to" becomes "will"). We suggest adding to SLOs 1 and 2 to better reflect the community focus of the program's goals statement. This could be done by adding a few words to demonstrate that students will also be able to write for and speak to communities. SLOs 3 and 4 seem incomplete. Can more details be added to put them in line with 1 and 2?

SLOAs 1, 2, and 4 have a clear rubric and plan for assessment. 3 has a clear metric for assessment. No changes are recommended for assessment.

Student Success and Equity Feedback

Narrative:

The new program just increased its enrollment to 6 students in 2025 from none in 2024, hence student success and equity cannot be assessed at present.

High Impact Practices Feedback

Narrative:

The HIPs are fairly well-aligned with the SLOAs, however 'publications' should probably be removed from the list of HIPs as these are not necessarily expected for the MMS and not assessed as part of the SLOAs in contrast to the MS in Marine Biology. It is a little early to assess whether the HIPs are prompting the students to engage in meaningful experiences, but having examples of capstone projects from the first cohort will be informative when those are available. It's not stated which of the courses is considered 'writing intensive', but I assume this HIP may be fulfilled by the new capstone course? This could be clarified in the next review.

Profile Feedback

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

Financial Feedback

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ High Tuition Revenues | ☐ High Grant Revenues |
| ☒ Operates at Low Cost | ☒ Productive Faculty |
| ☐ Opportunities to Increase Revenue | ☒ Low Enrollment |

Reviewer Names:

Cramb, Hennon, Horstmann, Hueffer, Kelley, Mueter

Dean Review

Program Name: Marine Studies – Master of Marine Studies

Academic Year 2025/2026

Dean Feedback

Overall feedback narrative:

The MMS degree effectively leverages existing courses, many in asynchronous mode, to allow professional students (ie those working, or seeking a terminal graduate degree) a career advancement opportunity as related to marine sciences. MMS students pay full tuition and fees, unlike thesis-based MS (or PhD) students. It is true that enrollment could be improved, and the asynchronous modality is/will move the needle in that direction with time, however this degree provides tuition and fees that help expand our overall academic mission at no additional cost to deliver courses.

Recommendation to University-Wide Committee **No**

Vice Provost Review

Program Name: Marine Studies – Master of Marine Studies

Academic Year 2025/2026

Vice Provost Feedback

Overall feedback narrative:

The program made the requested revisions to the SLOA following the 2023 mid-cycle review, including removing the employment-preparation SLO and providing rubrics used to collect assessment evidence. With enrollment increasing from zero to six students, the program is moving in a positive direction; however, because students have not yet completed the degree, there is limited student success data available for SLO assessment. The four SLOs are clearly written and supported by appropriate assessment procedures, but the program will need to include the relevant artifacts and direct evidence once students begin completing the program. For the 2027 mid-cycle review, the program will be expected to provide data demonstrating whether each SLO has been achieved, include any updated assessment tools, and offer a more complete discussion of curriculum strengths or needed changes based on assessment results.

Student success information is necessarily limited due to the program's launch in Fall 2024 and the absence of a graduating cohort, though early indicators are promising. Enrollment has reached six students, and faculty report strong academic performance supported by capstone projects, collaborative assi -
research experiences, and professional presentations such as at the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] These experiences provide authentic, practice-based learning aligned
without graduates, trends in persistence, pass rates, completion, or equity gaps cannot yet be evaluated. Continued recruitment efforts will be important, and future reviews should consider how the program will assess professional outcomes and career advancement as cohorts complete the degree.

The HIP narrative is limited and would benefit from clearer description of how specific practices connect to the SLOA, how they are assessed, and where they appear in the coursework. Strengthening this section by providing narrative detail for each selected HIP category will help the program better document effectiveness and demonstrate how these practices support student learning outcomes. As the program grows, continued monitoring and clearer articulation of HIP implementation will be essential for demonstrating continuous improvement and closing the loop in future reviews.



Department Profile and Financial Data

Department Name: **Marine Biology**

Last updated: 2025/2026

Department Profile and Financial Data

This section aligns with Board of Regents Policy 10.06 and supports systemwide consistency in academic program review. Responses are maintained across review cycles and may not need to be updated annually. Please review your previous answers and update only if necessary.

When answering the following questions, refer exclusively to the standardized Financial Data Template provided by UAF. Work with your data liaison to interpret the template accurately. Do not include any additional or alternative data — consistency across programs is essential. To maintain integrity and standardization across all of UAF it is very important that you do not provide any additional or alternative data from this template.

Confirmation of Review

Have you reviewed the information in this section and made any necessary updates? **No**

Financial Data Spreadsheet

☐ I have reviewed the Financial Template for updates and accuracy.

Cost Effectiveness

Please describe strategies such as instructional efficiency, shared resources, cross-listed courses, or other ways your department uses resources thoughtfully.

Response:

We have very low confidence in the data provided (hence "no" and "not checked" response above, we reviewed that data, but to the best of our knowledge, data are not accurate). For example, according to the data, Marine Biology generated no tuition or other revenue in FY2023. This is incorrect and most likely the result of the Marine Biology and Oceanography departments splitting in 2024 (in 2023 both were combined in MSL). It is unclear why Marine Biology did not at least get half the credit for that year, as we had a combined 37 majors in our M.S. and Ph.D. programs. Regardless, using just 2 years of data our tuition revenue is increasing, which is in line with increased class sizes, especially at the undergraduate level, which is not accounted for here. Marine Biology faculty are teaching (based on the catalog) 17 undergraduate classes and 17 graduate classes. They also supervised 16 undergraduate senior theses over the report period. This is a substantial effort and equates to about 50% of our faculty teaching workload. Involvement and high scientific rigor in our undergraduate education is further supported by Marine Biology advised undergraduate publications in the peer-reviewed literature (n=7), conference presentations (n=29), and best presentation awards (n=2). Finally, of those undergraduate students who declared a concentration in the CFOS BS program, the majority declared for the Marine Biology concentration, indicating the popularity of the Marine Biology classes and Marine Biology faculty involvement in the BS program. Reported FTEs also do not align with the reality of our support. The Marine Biology program currently has only 6 full time faculty, 1 half time, 1 admin (<50%), and 2 research faculty. As TA support is included in this number, which is also misleading, the Marine Biology department typically has 2 FTE as TAs (1 for "The Oceans", 1 shared between "Scientific Diving" and "Aquatic Invertebrates"). The numbers for majors in programs also seem off, while the numbers for FY2023 and FY2025 appear correct, majors in our program in FY 2024 were 29, not 14. Finally, while the workload units assigned to teaching may be correct (not sure given the issues with the rest of the data), a large number of our faculty is underreporting their teaching load, e.g., do not account for undergraduate advising or supervision of senior theses or not accounting for graduate student committees. The main reason for this is that we have to balance our workloads at 40 units, even though Marine Biology faculty spend a much higher effort that goes underreported. Overall, it is difficult to impossible to look at 2 years of data and come to a "thoughtful" conclusion, especially when at least 50% of our efforts (i.e., undergraduate teaching) are not captured in the graduate program reviews.

Associated Programs

Program Name	Degree Type
Marine Biology	MS
Marine Biology	PhD
Fisheries and Marine Sciences	BS

Collaborator Name(s):

Collaborator Email(s):



Financial Data

Department Name: Marine Biology

Academic Year 2025/2026

	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	For Data Entry Staff	For Programs and Review Committees
Total Student Credit Hours (SCH)	0	748	765	Provided in SCH tab in the student success data provided by PAIR.	
Service SCH	0	513	501	Sum rows labeled as "In unit, outside department, Service" and "Outside unit, Service" in the SCH tab of the data provided by PAIR.	
Department FTEs	5.66	6	6	FTE = Full-time equivalent employee. This field will auto-populate from the FTE Worksheet below.	
Total SCH per Department FTE	0.00	124.67	127.50		
Service SCH per Department FTE	0.00	85.50	83.50		
Majors in Programs	37	14	36	Sum for all programs from the Majors Total tab in the data provided by PAIR.	
Department FTE's	5.66	6	6	This field will auto-populate from the FTE Worksheet below.	
Majors per Department FTE	6.54	2.33	6.00		

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	
Total Expenditures					

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.	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				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
Fees				Course Fees (9159)	
Other UA Receipts/Revenue				e.g. Performance and Sales Receipts, Space Rental Revenue, Indirect Cost Recovery (F1/F7); NOTE: COURSE FEES (9159) REPORTED ABOVE	
Total Revenue					

Workload Allocation	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	
Teaching Units	101.25	102	99.5	Department faculty's workload units assigned to teaching
Service Units	22.8	23	26	Department faculty's workload units assigned to service
Research Units	106.47	115	114.5	Department faculty's workload units assigned to research

Full-Time Equivalent Worksheet*	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	
Faculty FTEs	5.66	6	6	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).
Adjunct FTEs				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				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 Department FTEs	5.66	6	6	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)

Information last updated by: Luke Canady

Date: october the 3rd in the year 2025 (DKQ - 2025.10.16)