



Academic Program Review

Program Name: Applied Business - Certificate

Academic Year 2025/2026

Recent Recommendations

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

Response:

The previous program review provided department-wide feedback that was applied across all Applied Business and Applied Accounting programs, including both the AAS and Certificate levels. Because the recommendations were nearly identical across all four programs, it was sometimes unclear which actions were intended specifically for the Applied Business Certificate. The primary themes of the feedback focused on improving the clarity of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA), strengthening the connection between program outcomes and course-level assessments, and ensuring regular documentation of student learning artifacts.

In response, faculty approached these recommendations holistically through a comprehensive 2023–2024 program redesign that revised the SLOA and simplified the structure of the certificate. The redesign removed the prior concentration tracks such as Marketing, Office Management, and Tourism to create a single, unified curriculum emphasizing core business competencies applicable across industries. These changes clarified learning outcomes, improved alignment between courses and assessment goals, and made the certificate more accessible and stackable into the Applied Business AAS degree.

The faculty continue to review course-level assessments to ensure that student work demonstrates achievement of the updated outcomes and remains consistent with the program's applied, workforce-oriented focus. Although faculty capacity remains limited, the department remains committed to maintaining strong instructional quality and ongoing reflection to ensure the certificate continues to meet the needs of students and local workforce demands.

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:

Assessment of the Applied Business Certificate's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) focuses on evaluating students' achievement in key areas including business fundamentals, communication, customer service, supervision, and applied problem-solving. Faculty assess student learning through a variety of course-level assignments and projects in core courses such as BA F151X Introduction to Business, ABUS F175 Customer Service, ABUS F179 Supervision Fundamentals, and ABUS F260 Marketing Principles. Artifacts such as business proposals, marketing plans, and written reflections provide direct evidence of students' ability to apply business concepts in practical and professional contexts.

Findings indicate that students demonstrate strong engagement with applied projects and show consistent proficiency in understanding business operations and customer service principles. Areas for continued growth include written communication and analysis of real-world business data skills that are being strengthened through scaffolded writing assignments and structured project templates in courses like ABUS F271 Business Communications and BA F151X Introduction to Business.

The program's redesigned curriculum and updated SLOA have improved alignment between learning outcomes and course assessments. Faculty plan to continue monitoring student performance and reviewing assignment rubrics to ensure that assessment practices remain consistent and reflective of the program's applied, workforce-focused goals.

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:

Yes. Based on the findings of the revised SLOA and a comprehensive review of course outcomes, the Applied Business Certificate underwent significant curricular changes during the 2023–2024 program redesign. The most substantial change was the removal of all certificate-level concentrations, which were previously organized into tracks such as Marketing, Office Management, and Tourism. These concentrations were replaced with a streamlined, unified curriculum designed to build core business competencies that apply across industries and better align with the Applied Business AAS degree and allow concentration selection at the AAS level.

The redesigned certificate now includes a consistent foundation of courses such as BA F151X Introduction to Business, ABUS F175 Customer Service, ABUS F179 Supervision Fundamentals, ABUS F241 Business Law or ABUS F242 Employment Law, and ABUS F260 Marketing Principles. This structure ensures that every student gains essential knowledge in management, marketing, customer service, and business operations, rather than specializing early in one area. These changes simplify advising, improve transferability into the AAS, AA, and enhance workforce readiness and continued education by focusing on universally applicable business skills.

The current curriculum's strength lies in its balance of theory and application providing students with opportunities to practice professional communication, leadership, and problem-solving through real-world projects and case studies. These revisions have positioned the Applied Business Certificate as both an efficient stand-alone credential for immediate employment and a strong foundation for continued study in business and related fields.

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: **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? **Yes**

If so, please summarize what changes were made.

Response:

Yes. The Applied Business Certificate SLOA was fully revised during the 2023–2024 program redesign to reflect the updated curriculum and the removal of concentration areas. The revised SLOA clarifies measurable outcomes that emphasize communication, leadership, customer service, and business problem-solving skills directly tied to workforce readiness and success in entry-level management and administrative roles.

Communication outcomes are now embedded throughout the program and assessed in multiple courses, including BA F151X Introduction to Business, ABUS F175 Customer Service, ABUS F179 Supervision Fundamentals, and ABUS F260 Marketing Principles. These courses require students to complete written assignments, deliver presentations, and collaborate on applied business projects that demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively in professional settings. The updated SLOA also standardizes language across outcomes to ensure alignment with both the Applied Business AAS program and UAF's broader commitment to student skill development in communication and critical thinking.

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 Labs | ☐ Other |
| | ☐ 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:

High-impact practices (HIPs) are central to the Applied Business Certificate and directly support the program's Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). The certificate's applied, skill-based structure integrates multiple HIPs to ensure students gain practical experience and transferable professional skills that align with industry expectations.

Collaborative projects and writing-intensive assignments are woven throughout the curriculum, particularly in courses such as BA F151X Introduction to Business, ABUS F175 Customer Service, and ABUS F179 Supervision Fundamentals, where students work together to analyze real-world business scenarios, develop communication materials, and propose solutions to management challenges. Service and community-based learning occurs through applied coursework that connects classroom learning to authentic business contexts such as creating customer service plans, drafting marketing materials, or analyzing ethical business decisions that reflect community values. Students also develop ePortfolios to document their learning throughout their courses and demonstrate achievement of outcomes related to communication, professionalism, and leadership.

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: Decrease

Pass Rates: Select

Student Credit Hours: Increase

Majors: Decrease

Degrees Awarded: Decrease

Other Trends (if applicable):

****Note from Accreditation administrator - submitter noted that pass rates were not disaggregated****

Achievement Disparities

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

Response:

Even though it looks like the persistence trend is down, in 2023, we updated this program from the applied business management certificate to the applied business certificate, and the data doesn't clearly group both programs as we are phasing out the applied business management certificate. Credit hour production for the new certificate is bringing in higher credit hours because the certificate is more streamlined. As we were transitioning the certificate types in 2024, we were encouraging students to transition into the associates degree program in order to utilize all of their credits they've already taken, so our success data has a jump in 2024, and is starting to settle back down to more normalized numbers in 2025.

Closing the Loop

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

Response:

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:

The Applied Business Certificate advances UAF's mission by providing accessible, high-quality education that prepares students for immediate workforce participation and lifelong career growth. Rooted in UAF's commitment to teaching and public service, the program equips students with practical business, communication, and leadership skills that support the vitality of Alaska's communities and industries. The certificate's applied curriculum enables students many of whom are first-generation, working adults, or returning learners to develop competencies that strengthen small business and nonprofit sectors. By offering flexible, workforce-aligned education that leads directly to employment or continued study, the Applied Business Certificate embodies UAF's mission to promote lifelong learning, economic development, and active citizenship.

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

Response:

The Applied Business Certificate is closely connected to other programs within the UA system and serves as a key entry point for students pursuing business education at multiple levels. The certificate stacks directly into the Applied Business AAS, allowing students to build upon their foundational coursework without duplication of credits. In addition, courses from the certificate can be applied toward the Associate of Arts transfer degree, providing students with flexibility to pursue further study in business or related disciplines.

Like the AAS, the certificate also aligns with bachelor's-level pathways including the Bachelor of Applied Management (BAM) and Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which offer opportunities for students to continue building their credentials within UAF. However, the UA system currently lacks a direct articulation route from community college business programs into a traditional Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA). As a result, students seeking a streamlined pathway to a four-year business degree face structural barriers that require creative advising and individualized planning. Continued collaboration across the UA system would help improve these pathways and better support Alaskan students seeking efficient, lifelong learning trajectories from certificate to bachelor's-level study.

Who are your key community or external partners?

Response:

The Applied Business Certificate program maintains strong connections with community and industry partners who help ensure the curriculum remains relevant to workforce needs. The program benefits from the expertise of adjunct faculty members who are active business professionals in areas such as management, marketing, and entrepreneurship, allowing students to learn from instructors with current, real-world experience. The program also engages with organizations including the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, the Alaska Business Interior Accelerator, and local small business owners who support student learning through guest lectures, mentorship, and applied projects. These partnerships strengthen the link between education and employment, providing students with opportunities to network, understand local business challenges, and apply their classroom learning in ways that directly contribute to the success and sustainability of local business community.

What role do your services courses play, if any?

Response:

Service courses such as ABUS F155 Business Math, ABUS F154 Human Relations, ABUS F170 Business English, and ABUS F271 Business Communications play a vital role in supporting both the Applied Business Certificate and a wide range of other programs across UAF's Community and Technical College. These courses provide foundational skills in communication, professionalism, teamwork, and quantitative reasoning that are essential for success in business and beyond. They are taken not only by Applied Business students but also by those in programs such as accounting, healthcare, applied technologies, and aviation. Within the Applied Business Certificate, these service courses reinforce the program's Student Learning Outcomes related to leadership, communication, and problem-solving, ensuring that graduates are prepared to engage effectively with colleagues, customers, and community members in diverse workplace settings.

How do your graduates succeed after leaving the program?

Response:

Graduates of the Applied Business Certificate program find success through immediate entry into the workforce and by continuing their education within UAF. Many certificate completers obtain employment in administrative, customer service, sales, and middle management roles within local businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. The applied nature of the program equips them with practical skills in management, communication, and customer relations that employers consistently value. Other graduates choose to continue their studies by stacking their certificate into the Applied Business AAS, applying credits toward the Associate of Arts, or later pursuing the Bachelor of Applied Management (BAM) or Interdisciplinary Studies degrees. In this way, the certificate serves both as a direct pathway to employment and as a flexible foundation for lifelong learners seeking to advance their education and career opportunities within Alaska's diverse workforce.

Submitter and Collaborator Names:

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Committee Review

Program Name: Applied Business – Certificate

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:

Comments for the Certificate in Applied Business are similar to the AAS in Applied Business because the programs are strongly linked/scaffolded and, as a result, the program, reviews were very similar. Both are very strong academic program previews and the faculty should be commended on that outcome. The program SLOA/SLOs should serve as a model for other CTC academic programs. Note that it will be critical to address the section on closing the loop for the 2027 full-program review.

The program responded to the recommendations from the 2023 full-program review. Recommendations included clarifying the SLOA, strengthening the connection between program outcomes and course-level assessments, and providing student learning artifacts and instruments. The faculty addressed the feedback through a comprehensive program redesign, which included a SLOA revision and that also simplified the certificate. The redesign is in progress and has been limited due to a reduction in faculty following a retirement. It will be interesting to see the outcomes of this redesign, with supporting evidence, in two years at the 2027 full-program review. For the full-program review in 2027, should include evidence to document the redesign outcome for all SLOs to support the narrative overviews as well as documenting continuous improvement and closing of the loop.

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:

Provided 6 SLOs, all of which have clear and well-defined procedures for assessment and implementation plan (that includes where in the program the SLO must be completed and assessed in the program). The assessment plan and implementation processes for each SLO were strong; the artifacts/rubrics used for assessment was included in the supplementary documents folder. Evidence (data) on how the SLOs is being met was provided in primarily narrative form in the template. For the full-program review in 2027, please provide evidence for all SLOs as a more in-depth narrative with data and/or as a supplementary document(s). This was a very strong and well-developed SLOA, inclusion of the artifacts is greatly appreciated.

The program provided an overview of the curricular changes, their rationale, and the realized or potential impacts/improvements of those changes.

The program did not provide a response on how SLOs are reflected in the HIPs and student success data. This is essential to discuss as it is a primary expectation of NWCCU. Documenting continuous improvement and the closing of the loop are important components of the program review process, not just as an exercise, but to demonstrate that assessment results are used to make meaningful, evidence-based changes that enhance program quality and student learning. This process ensures accountability, fosters a culture of ongoing improvement, and provides clear evidence to accreditors and stakeholders that actions lead to measurable outcomes. For the full-program review in 2027, should include additional evidence to document this outcome specifically for each SLO to support the narrative overviews.

Student Success and Equity Feedback

Narrative:

The program successfully addressed the trends reflected in the Student Success Dashboard, noting that pass-rate data was skewed due to the lack of disaggregation and that the transition from the Applied Business Management Certificate to the Applied Business Certificate temporarily reduced persistence rates as the former program was phased out.

The review highlights the program's strong emphasis on preparing first-generation students, working adults, and returning learners for the workforce through flexible, work-aligned courses and pathways that scaffold into other university programs, including the Bachelor of Applied Management and Interdisciplinary Studies degrees. It also connects students with community partners to support applied learning, though reporting on the outcomes and effectiveness of these efforts would strengthen the 2027 full program review. As part of the program transition, students have been encouraged to continue into the associate degree, which the program notes has led to increased enrollment.

Overall, this appears to be a strong program undergoing productive change, and the 2027 full program review will be an important opportunity to report further data demonstrating the impact and success of the redesigned certificate.

High Impact Practices Feedback

Narrative:

Reviewer Names: