

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FOR FISHERIES

STRENGTHS:

- The geographic distribution of faculty between Fairbanks and Lena Point, plus Kodiak and Anchorage, leads to direct contact with stakeholders.
- High publication rates by faculty (2014-2019 12 faculty published 226 peer-reviewed articles); both graduate and undergraduate students are often co-authors (129 of those articles had student(s) as co-authors).
- Highly successful in attracting external funding from diverse sources, including federal, state, and stakeholder funding; the majority of funding supports students; two faculty positions funded by stakeholders.
- Research focuses on fisheries issues that are important to the state of Alaska, central to its economy, and important for local communities and industries.
- Early adopters of distance education with most being video-delivered; expanding their delivery of asynchronous web-based courses; switched to zoom as platform which increased student satisfaction; distance delivered courses allow Fisheries to reach students all across Alaska, resulting in high proportion of Alaska Native and/or rural students, working students, and non-traditional students.
- Faculty serve on high-level advisory councils, including federal, state, and private; much service to the profession; all important to Alaska.
- MS and PhD graduate students numbers are among the highest at UAF.
- 62% of graduate students are employed in Alaska (27% work for the state; 24% work for federal management agencies; others work for NGOs, tribal organization, private industry, and educational institutions); graduates are in high demand in Alaska.
- Students are required to complete an internship, which leads to strong networks across the state, increase retention and graduation rates, and to jobs in Alaska.
- The degree options share courses, thus each degree is cost-neutral.
- BA in Fisheries is unique in the US.

WEAKNESSES:

- Geographic distribution of faculty and the resulting necessity for distance delivery of classes has resulted in some student dissatisfaction; undergraduates are especially negatively affected by this, e.g. less interaction with peers, fewer opportunities for mentorship.
- 8 faculty in Juneau; 5 in Fairbanks; 1 in Anchorage; 1 in Kodiak, but the majority of students are in Fairbanks; this means that the Fairbanks faculty do the majority of advising and teaching; the physical separation also presents a challenge for faculty collaboration.
- There is no financial incentive to cross-listing courses although cross-listing can attract additional students.
- Program reviews note the loss of faculty and staff positions.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Fisheries is vital to the economy of Alaska which grants opportunities for significant stakeholder support for the department.
- Fisheries research addresses some of the most urgent issues of the day, e.g. the effects of climate change.
- Residents in Anchorage (unlike other urban centers) are heavily invested in sport and personal-use fisheries; the Anchorage area has the most population and the most legislators; and legislators understand the importance of the fisheries programs.
- The strong network of alumni (over 900 graduates) across the state presents multiple opportunities for support.
- The Alaska-focused external funding has provided the opportunity for the department to mitigate the negative effects of declining state funding.
- Departmental faculty have been leaders in video-conference course delivery; the department continues to expand in this direction, and also in asynchronous web-based courses.
- Department expanded its BS Fisheries degree to BS in Fisheries and Ocean Sciences which has the potential to attract more students.
- Dean noted that consolidation of fisheries faculty would strengthen the undergraduate program and enhance faculty opportunities for faculty to collaborate.

THREATS:

- Decline in university-supported TAs and scholarships resulted in declining enrollment of graduate students.
- Loss of staff positions has shifted work onto faculty and students.
- Further loss of faculty positions will negatively affect the department.
- Budget crisis and negative publicity has negatively affected recruitment and retention of faculty as well as students.
- Dean noted that consolidation of fisheries faculty would negatively affect the direct interaction fisheries faculty now enjoy with stakeholders.

CENTRALITY TO MISSION:

- Fisheries programs are central to the mission of the CFOS and serve the needs of UAF and Alaska.

INDICATORS OF QUALITY:

- High publication rates by faculty with both graduate and undergraduate students are often co-authors.
- Highly successful in attracting external funding, including federal, state, and stakeholder funding.
- Strong network of alumni who are employed in Alaska by state and federal agencies, private industry; the Alaska fisheries industry and state and federal agencies readily hire graduates from the Fisheries program.

COST-EFFECTIVENESS:

- The degree options share courses, thus each additional degree is largely cost-neutral.

- Faculty are very successful in attracting external funding.
- ~5 FTEs for 147 students, with an unrestricted salaries and benefits cost of approximately \$780,000.

	MAJORS	DEGREES
Fisheries BA	FY15: 17/ FY19: 13	FY15: 3 / FY19: 2
Fisheries BS	FY15 : 52/ FY19: 56	FY15: 4/ FY19: 9
Fisheries MS	FY15: 57/ FY19: 44	FY15: 12/ FY19: 15
Fisheries PhD	FY15: 36/ FY19: 33	FY15: 4 / FY19: 6

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Fisheries BA:

RECOMMENDATION:	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:	DATE FOR FOLLOW-UP:
Continuation w/ improvement plan (8 votes)	Examine need for BA vs. BS. Develop plan to increase number of students and graduates and eliminate BA degree if there is no improvement.	two years

Fisheries and Ocean Sciences BS:

RECOMMENDATION:	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:	DATE FOR FOLLOW-UP:
Continuation (8 votes)	Ensure that geographic distribution of faculty meets student needs. Continue current efforts to develop asynchronous online program. Examine cost efficiency and potential industry support of Kodiak facility.	n/a

Fisheries MS:

RECOMMENDATION:	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:	DATE FOR FOLLOW-UP:
Continuation (8 votes)		

Fisheries PhD:

RECOMMENDATION:	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:	DATE FOR FOLLOW-UP:
Continuation (8 votes)		