MISSION STATEMENT:
The SFOS Fisheries Division will create a center of academic excellence in the fisheries discipline that promotes lifelong learning for undergraduate students preparing to enter a career in fisheries.

GOAL STATEMENT:
The goal of the B.A. in Fisheries degree program is to educate undergraduate students in a broad, interdisciplinary curriculum in fisheries science, with particular emphasis on the social, cultural, and economic aspects of fish and invertebrate fisheries, in preparation for a career in fisheries and/or the seafood industry in Alaska and elsewhere.

INTENDED OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:
1. Have excellent oral and written communication skills.
2. Obtain interdisciplinary knowledge of fishery science, with particular emphasis on the social, cultural, and economic aspects of fish and invertebrate fisheries.
3. Achieve knowledge of the scientific tools of data collection in interdisciplinary fisheries science and demonstrate competence in compiling and reporting of that data.
4. Earn a degree in a timely fashion.
5. Be prepared to compete successfully for admission to interdisciplinary M.S. or M.A. programs in Fisheries or related science disciplines.
6. Be prepared to compete successfully for entry-level professional career positions in social, cultural, and economic aspects of fisheries in Alaska and elsewhere.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES:
1. Compare individual scores of students in similarly-scored evaluations of term papers in the introductory and capstone courses; 80% of students who complete both courses will improve scores. (Objectives 1-3)

For the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program, the entry level course is FISH 101 Introduction to Fisheries and the capstone course is FISH 487 Fisheries Management. For FISH 101, there are three writing assignments, with one assignment (summary of a global fishery) serving as the course term paper. In FISH 487, there are four writing assignments and students complete a group fisheries management project, which includes the development of a fisheries management plan; this assignment serves as the course term paper. Since the last outcome assessment, which took place in spring 2012, three students have completed both FISH 101 and FISH 487 and have graduated from the degree program. The mean percent (and percent range) for the term paper in FISH 101 and FISH 487 was 90.3% (range, 86 to 95%) and 84.5% (range, 72 to 96%), respectively. In tracking the individual scores of students, none of the students showed improvement in writing scores between FISH 101 and FISH 487. Although 80% of students that completed both FISH 101
and FISH 487 did not show improvement in their writing scores, this metric may not be reflective of their writing abilities due to differences in the types of writing assignments between the two classes and the level of grading rigor from the two course instructors. In addition, the sample size (N =3) is rather low; as a result, no meaningful cumulative analysis can be conducted at this time.

2. Track retention rates and rate of graduation within 5 years as evidence of achievement. Eighty percent (80%) of undergraduates will be retained each year, and 50% of juniors will complete degrees in ≤3 years. (Objective 4)

Since the initiation of the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program, the average retention rate for first-time freshman from years 1-2 is 63.6%. Retention rates for years 2-3 and 3-4 are much higher, with one exception. For freshmen and transfer students from years 2-3, retention rates are 85.7% and 85.1%, respectively. While the retention rate for freshman students is 100% for years 3-4, the retention rate for transfer students from years 3-4 is 72.2%. Although the data suggest that the retention rate goal for the undergraduate fisheries program (80%) is not being met for years 1-2 but is being exceeded for years 2-3 and 3-4 (with the exception of transfer students from years 3-4), these results must be interpreted with caution due to low sample sizes and because the program is just now seeing its first graduates.

As stated previously, the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program was initiated during the spring 2009 semester. In spring 2012, the first student graduated from this degree program. By the end of summer 2014, all three students that were enrolled in this degree program two years ago as juniors will have graduated within three years (100%), which exceeds our expectation of a 50% degree-completion rate within three years.

3. Eighty percent (80%) of graduates seeking employment in fisheries or aquatic sciences, or admission to a graduate program will succeed within one year of graduation. (Objectives 5-6)

To date, only four undergraduate students that were enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program have graduated (spring 2012: N = 1; spring 2013: N = 1) or will graduate (spring 2014; N = 2). The student that graduated in spring 2012 entered graduate school in fall 2013 and is still a graduate student at that institution. The student that graduated in spring 2013 took a year off from work in the Fisheries field, but will be working during summer 2014 as a Fisheries technician for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG). For the two students that will be graduating in spring 2014, one student will work this summer for the ADFG as a Fisheries technician and the other student will be employed on a commercial fishing boat. All students that have graduated with a B.A. in Fisheries (100%) have successfully secured employment, which exceeds the expectation for this metric.
4. Compile and summarize mentor evaluations from the experiential learning internships as evidence of readiness for a professional position. 80% of students will be judged by mentors to have performed at a satisfactory level for an entry-level fisheries professional. (Objective 6)

_Mentor evaluations were compiled for six different experiential learning internships completed by undergraduate students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program since spring 2012. The mean mentor evaluation score (out of 5) was 4.4, with a range from 3.0 to 5.0. A mentor evaluation score of 4.0 or higher is considered satisfactory for an entry-level fisheries professional, and 5 out of the 6 mentor evaluation scores for student internships in the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program were 4.0 or higher (83% of students) which exceeds our goal (80%) for this metric._

5. Eighty percent (80%) of graduates will be "satisfied" or "very satisfied" overall, with the education they received in the Fisheries Program at UAF. (All objectives)

_Based on responses to the exit interview survey, all three graduates from the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program since spring 2012 provided a high overall rating of the education received in the Fisheries Program at UAF. On a scale from 1 to 10, the range in the overall evaluation of the Fisheries Program from the three respondents was 7 to 9, with a mean score of 8. All three of the scores were “7” or higher, indicating that 100% of our B.A. students were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the program. Note that we consider a score of 9-10 as very satisfied and 7-8 as satisfied on a scale of 1 to 10. Specific comments that support this assessment include the following:_

“Overall I’m very satisfied with my UAF education and would rate it an 8. I think that my education has helped me to prepare for a career in fisheries. There is a large amount of knowledge gained in the BA program; business, accounting, biology, statistics, and environmental policy to name a few. This large base has helped me to understand fisheries and the environment that surrounds the fishing industry.”

“I chose the Bachelor of Arts degree in fisheries because the course work seemed to be in line with what I thought was interesting. Understanding the dynamics that the fish industry deals with is fascinating. In my past experience working with several agencies in Alaska, I realized that a fishery deals with much more than just science. I would rate my experience a 9.”

“I would rate my overall experience a 7 because of the lack of consistent course offerings at the university. I feel like the education and experience that I had through the fishery program has helped prepare me for a future career and possibly graduate school in fisheries.”