Since the 2002/03 academic year the Justice Department has been through a tumultuous series of faculty personnel events, including a retirement, termination, a death of a new hire, and a resignation. Consequently the Department began the 2004/05 academic year with 50% of its faculty being new faculty, and only one member of the department having been a full-time Justice faculty for more than two years. The significant turnover, besides being disruptive to the normal functioning of the Department, frustrated the implementation of the assessment plans. Therefore, during the fall of 2004 the Justice faculty reviewed the Department’s Mission Statement and its assessment plans. Subsequently, with input from the entire faculty, a new Mission Statement has been developed, along with new assessment plans for the Bachelor of Arts in Justice program and the Master of Arts in Administration of Justice. The revised Justice Mission Statement and the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan for the M.A. in Administration of Justice are attached with this report.

Program Objective 1: Provide advanced knowledge and skills to leaders and potential leaders in the criminal justice system to promote effective management, administration, and policy development.

Monitoring of the results of the comprehensive exam required for graduation from the program is the primary direct assessment tool for this objective. The first comprehensive exam for the program was conducted in July of 2003. With six students taking the exam, only two students successfully passed all five components of the exam. The other four were required to re-take one or more of the exams components after a period of preparation for the failed components.

As a result of the low success rate with regard to the 2003 comprehensive exam, the Department repeatedly encouraged students, scheduled to take the 2004 comprehensive exam, to intensively prepare for the exam three to four months prior to the exam date. To facilitate their preparation, the Department set up a Blackboard site through which the students could exchange ideas while preparing for the exam. Additionally, as part of the capstone course that is presented just prior to students taking the comprehensive exam, a three-day hypothetical problem was presented. The hypothetical included key concepts involved in the various components of the comprehensive exam.

The results of the second comprehensive exam, administered in July of 2004, were eight of nine students passing all of the components. The ninth student failed one component, which they subsequently passed after three months of review.

A second assessment tool for Objective 1 is the review of the Discussion Board Forums for JUST 605, 615, 620, 625, and 640. While the first official departmental review of the
forums will not be conducted until May of 2005, anecdotal information suggests extraordinary student participation in the forums reflecting knowledge contained in course materials, as well as a wealth of knowledge gleaned from the professional experiences of the students.

A third assessment tool for Objective 1 will be the administering of an exit survey. The exit survey will be administered for the first time in June of 2005. However, individual comments of students suggest a student perception that significant knowledge is being transmitted to students. For instance, several students with criminal justice agency supervisory experience have indicated they wished they had taken our courses prior to becoming supervisors. One law enforcement supervisor indicated that each of the 500 officers under his supervision should be required to take JUST 625.

*Program Objective 2:* Create a communication network providing criminal justice professionals with a convenient medium for the exchange of ideas within an academic setting.

The primary assessment tool for Objective 2 is the review of the Discussion Board Forums. As previously indicated, the first formal review will occur in May 2005. However, informal observations indicate extraordinary student participation in many of the courses. The vast majority of the students enrolled in the program have substantial professional experience in a justice related field. While a significant number of the students are involved in law enforcement, others are involved in juvenile fields, corrections, criminal defense and criminal prosecution. Within the law enforcement field, students have ranged from having experience in UAF’s Public Safety Department to having experience as FBI supervisors. Consequently, students have been able to share a wealth of knowledge gained from personal experiences as well as from the course materials.

The second assessment tool for Objective 2 is a review of the qualifications of applicants to the program, their occupational relevance to criminal justice, and the geographic location of the applicants. In this regard the Department has been delighted with the quality of students applying to the program, the general diversity of the applicants’ professional experiences in justice related fields, and the geographic diversity of the applicants. The program has often found it necessary to reject qualified candidates because of the Department’s lack resources to meet student demand. The typical applicant has several years of criminal justice professional experience, and an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or greater. Applicants from the East Coast, Midwest, Mountain States, and West Coast have applied from out of state. Within the State of Alaska applicants have applied from Ketchikan, Sitka, Anchorage, Kenai, Homer, Bethel, Barrow, Fairbanks, Delta Junction, Tok, and Palmer. This combined with the already mentioned diversity in criminal justice employment has provided student cohorts with a breadth of experiences and knowledge to share amongst themselves.

*Program Objective 3:* Establish UAF’s Justice Department as a leader in internet delivered graduate education.
A primary assessment tool for Objective 3 is the Discussion Board Forums. For internet education to be successful, it should engage students in intellectual discussion. The level of participation on the Forums has been remarkable and indicative of a successful educational program.

The second assessment tool for Objective 3 is the exit survey, which as indicated above, will be administered for the first time in June 2005. Informal indications suggest the program is gaining recognition for the quality of its internet-based graduate program. In more than one instance, second and sometimes third applicants from a single agency have applied after one applicant from the agency has been involved in the program. Another informal indication of the recognition the program is achieving is the application of students already possessing graduate degrees. Several attorneys have applied to the program, and in one instance an applicant already possessed a masters in criminal justice from Florida State University.

In summary, the Master of Arts in Administration of Justice is meeting its stated objectives. The Department has recently developed a reasonable student outcomes assessment plan for the program and will be formally implementing the plan this spring.

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Justice Department