The mission of the Linguistics program at UAF is to promote a broader understanding of language structure, acquisition and use. The Linguistics Program strives to serve the people of Alaska by broadening knowledge of languages, especially Alaska native languages, and enhancing the quality of language teaching.

In serving that mission, the MA in Applied Linguistics seeks to assure that graduates are prepared either to compete successfully in the job market in a career related to language teaching, or to compete successfully for admission to Ph.D. programs in institutions of their choice.

1. **Assessment information collected**

The program is to be assessed annually based on five criteria:

a. **Graduate level communication (oral and written):**

   Written communication skills are primarily assessed through the written thesis or project. Oral communication skills are primarily assessed through the oral defense of the thesis or project. Both are evaluated by the student’s advisory committee at the time of the defense.

   Data collected: Project Defense Report or Thesis Defense Report as appropriate

b. **Comprehensive understanding of the student’s chosen concentration (Second Language Acquisition and Teaching; Language Documentation and Description; General Linguistics):** The student’s understanding of his/her chosen concentration is assessed in three ways.

   i. **Thesis/project defense:** The thesis/project defense is evaluated by the student’s advisory committee at the time of the defense.
Data collected: Project Defense Report or Thesis Defense Report as appropriate

ii. Graduate courses and seminars: Performance in graduate courses and seminars is evaluated by the faculty instructors.

Data collected: Final grade report

iii. Comprehensive Exam: The Exam is written and evaluated by a faculty committee and broadly covers the content areas relevant to the student’s area of concentration and research interests.

Data collected: Comprehensive Exam Report

c. Ability to produce professional reports and/or publishable papers

According to our Student Outcomes Assessment plan, students are to be actively mentored in professionalism by their major advisors and advisory committees. In FY10, Linguistics reported that “[r]equirements for public presentation are under development and will be listed in the department’s Graduate Student Handbook.”

To date, no requirements for public presentation have been enacted. However, faculty discussion revealed that [Name] (2012) formally presented to a student colloquium in 2012, [Name] (2013) presented a poster based on his thesis at the annual TESOL Convention in Philadelphia in 2012, and [Name] (current student) presented a jointly authored paper to the Alaska Native Studies Conference in Juneau in 2014.

Data collected: None

d. Independence in research: Research is assessed in two ways:

i. Written thesis or project: The thesis/project is evaluated by the student’s advisory committee.

Data collected: None.

ii. Thesis or project defense: The thesis/project defense is evaluated by the student’s advisory committee at the time of the defense.
Data collected: Project Defense Report or Thesis Defense Report as appropriate

e. Student satisfaction: Student satisfaction is to be assessed through an exit survey. The exit survey is to be administered as a condition for the program chair to sign off on the final thesis.

Data collected: None.

While no data is available for this report, it is unclear if the surveys were not distributed, not returned, or simply unrecoverable from our files.

At the time of this writing, the current program chair is the fourth chair in two years. This high turnover is largely due to sabbatical and other faculty research opportunities and should not be taken to reflect any dissatisfaction on the part of the faculty.

Further, at the time of this writing, many of the Linguistics faculty and the Administrative Assistant is in the process of moving out of the Brooks Building which suffered water damage this past winter. As a result, many files have been packed away and are currently unavailable for this report.

2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above

The faculty feel that the program largely meets the needs and goals of our students. As noted at the beginning of this report, the MA in Applied Linguistics largely measures its success in terms of the ability of our students to either (a) enter directly into the job market as language teachers or (b) gain admission to a Ph.D. program of their choice. By this measure, our 2012 and 2013 graduates did very well.

One student graduated in 2012 and three graduated in 2013. At the time of this writing, our graduates were engaged in the following professional activities:

- (2012), is pursuing a Ph.D. in Linguistics at the.
- (2013), teaches English overseas.
- (2013), teaches Spanish at.
- (2013), works as an actor.
The faculty further believe that our students’ ability to compete in both the job market and in Ph.D. admissions broadly reflects the quality of the preparation they received including:

a. Graduate level communication (oral and written)
b. Comprehensive understanding of the student’s chosen concentration
d. Independence in research: Research is assessed in two ways:

However, the faculty recognize there is significant room for improvement, both in terms of the quality of the data collected and the quality of our program itself. Specifically, it is of significant concern that data is not available for either of the following points:

c. Ability to produce professional reports and/or publishable papers
e. Student satisfaction

In addition, faculty are concerned by the relatively small number of program graduates in 2012 and 2013. This pattern is continued in 2014, with no MA graduates. However, we anticipate a large cohort of fifteen grant funded graduates in 2015 and we have four new MA students beginning in Fall 2014.

3. Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above

In section 2 above, we noted significant room for improvement in terms of

a. the quality of the data collected
b. the quality of our program
c. the number of program graduates

a. the quality of the data collected

No data was collected regarding student ability to produce professional reports or publishable papers. To address this, faculty will review this aspect of the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan to determine whether or not to retain the requirement or remove it. If the faculty determine the requirement should be removed, a revised Assessment plan will be
submitted in the Fall. If the faculty determine the requirement should remain, action will be taken to enforce the requirements.

No data on student satisfaction is available. It is unclear if this data was collected. To address this, faculty have agreed that this is primarily the responsibility of the program chair. The chair has accepted this responsibility and will not sign thesis or project defense reports without first determining if the Student Satisfaction Survey has been completed.

b. the quality of our program

As noted above, faculty feel that the program largely meets the needs and goals of our students. However, in informal discussion faculty noted that the low number of students in our program negatively impacts our ability to offer some required courses. This in turn may negatively affect students who need courses to complete the program in a timely fashion.

To address this, faculty have agreed to review course offerings and program requirements in an attempt to streamline the catalog. Dr. Sabine Siekmann and Dr. Siri Tuttle have agreed to provide an initial review and report back to the faculty in time to submit program changes in Fall 2014.

c. the number of program graduates

As noted above, the program saw one graduate in 2012, three in 2013 and none in 2014. While we have accepted four new students for 2014 and anticipate a large grant funded graduate class (15) in 2015, the faculty are concerned about the apparent episodic nature of our enrollment.

To address this, faculty have agreed to review the three concentrations (Second Language Acquisition and Teaching, Language Documentation and Description, General) to determine what changes, if any, would make the program more appealing to potential students. Informal discussions with incoming students suggest that being able to study both language documentation and second language acquisition/teaching in the same program may be a significant draw for students. As part of their initial review of course offerings (see b above), Dr. Siekmann and Dr. Tuttle will also look at this issue.
4. Identify the faculty members involved in reaching the conclusions drawn above and agreeing upon the curricular changes resulting

Cooper, Burns (Professor of English)

Johnston, Duff (Assistant Professor of English)

Marlow, Patrick (Associate Professor of Linguistics)

Siekmann, Sabine (Associate Professor of Linguistics)

Tuttle, Siri (Associate Professor of Linguistics)