Annual Outcomes Assessment Report
for the Department of Atmospheric Sciences’ MS Program
by Nicole Mölders
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1. The Department of Atmospheric Sciences’ MS program’s student learning outcome has been assessed by graduated students since 2001.

2. We intend to continue collecting data of exit interviews and Student Learning Outcome Assessment (SLOA) for the MS program.

3. Outcomes data and exit interviews were collected in 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 for the two students who graduated in AY13 and the eight students who graduated in AY14. The SLOA files were updated accordingly. Of the ten masters’ students, three are in PhD programs at Purdue University and the University of Alaska Fairbanks. One is enrolled in Language School and one is enrolled in a bachelor’s program in Mechanical Engineering. Three are employed and two are researching PhD programs at various schools.

4. A frequently mentioned difficulty is funding. However, with 99% of our program budget (including one TA position for spring semester) bound in salaries there is no possibility to fund students out of the departmental budget.

5. Students want to more opportunities to gain teaching experience. Unfortunately, we have only one TA position for spring semester which means that only one student per year will have a chance to get such experience. We will try to work with other departments for opportunities but their graduate student funding is tight as well.

6. As in previous years, the completed 2013 and 2014 “MS SLOA” are stored in the department’s administrative office.

7. A synoptic faculty search was conducted and two offers were made and accepted. Both taught their first class in AY13.

8. Six MS students won various awards such as travel awards to attend conferences in the lower 48. One won the department’s student publication award and the Exceptional Student Employee Award. One won the National Weather Association Special Appreciation Award.

9. A total of eight masters’ students had published papers either as first author or co-authored during the AY2013 and AY2014.

10. Six MS student either presented posters or gave oral presentations at the Alaska Weather Symposium, the Community Modeling and Analysis Conference (CMAS), and the American Geophysical Union (AGU), and during both AY13 and AY14.

11. One MS student attended a tutorial on the Community Earth System Model (CESM) in Boulder, CO.

12. One MS student did public outreach in April 2013 by traveling to Nome, Wales, and Shishmaref to work with local community members to gain ice and weather information relevant to his thesis work and performed a few public outreach activities. He manned a booth at the Kawerak Regional Conference to promote the Sea Ice for Walrus Outlook (SIWO) in Nome. In Wales, he sampled the shore fast sea ice as part of a longer-term monitoring program in place and spoke with a key contributor to SIWO. He also taught a three hour-length high school classes a few fundamentals of
sea-ice research field techniques and geophysics. Also served as a co-instructor for the five, 45-minute classes entitled Ice Science during Inupiaq Days in Shishmaref School.

13. One MS student is a member of a group led by the Graduate Dean that is working to create a new student-led course on arctic natural hazards. In March 2014 the group traveled to Arkhangelsk, Russia, to meet with students and faculty at Northern Arctic Federal University, and representatives from other Russian, Finnish, Canadian, and Norwegian Universities to begin creating the framework for this course. The goal is to bring scientists together with emergency managers and course designers to create a course that teaches the science behind arctic natural hazards in a useful way to people with an interest in hazard mitigation, so that there is more thought put into ways these hazards can be handled more effectively.

14. Budget implications: We need some support for graduate student stipends and thesis completion stipends

Attachments: MS SLOA; PhD SLOA
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cc: Dean Paul Layer, Executive Officer Hild Peters