1. Assessment information collected

Thus far we’ve used the direct measurements of course completion and project development, implementation, and presentation within EBOT 100, Introduction to Ethnobotany, and EBOT 220, Ethnobotanical Techniques, as our means of assessing student progress and competency. We realize, now, that these are not optimal measures – and are making steps now to correct this gap in our program management in our spring semester’s offerings (see updated SLOA).

2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above

The first few years of our existence at UAF have required some rather extraordinary efforts for a two-faculty-manned, 32 credit certificate program, including being responsible for all of the logistics involved in: convening 4 Elder conferences, remote intensive field courses each summer, organizing and hosting the Western Alaska Interdisciplinary Science Conference in 2011, facilitating student exchanges with University of Hawaii campuses, establishing an ethnobotanical garden and herbarium at the Kuskokwim campus, providing non-credit workshops to community members in several regions of the state, and writing/publishing online the first bilingual Yup’ik/English Manual of Ethnobotany.

We tell you this, not to make excuses – but to inform you that much of our time has been devoted to helping the program meet our USDA grant funders’ objectives, many of which are included in the list above. We want to be clear that we have not consciously omitted other, more optimal measures – we were just very focused on recruiting into and matriculating students from the program. In this type of development phase assessment didn’t rise to the top of our to-do list. Once we build the new measures into our existing structure (to begin Spring 2015) it won’t take long to begin assessing the ones that we’ve outlined in our currently-submitted SLOA.
3. Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above

We have had an opportunity to discuss our first five years at UAF at our May 2014 EBOT All Hands Gathering, attended by our EBOT Advisory Board, EBOT program Elders, program graduates, current students, partners from University of Hawaii (UH) Maui, AH-Windward Community College, and other colleagues. As a result of these discussions, we are going to adjust the program to add a second track with an emphasis on social science. Many of our students are very interested in exploring the cultural aspects of ethnobotany, and they will be able to do that much more easily within our newly-designed two track system.

A larger issue for this program is something that other new programs also experience within UAF. We do not fit within the tightly-packed framework of existing programs, and so, are not able to effectively recruit potential students into EBOT because it cannot fit within their program’s required course matrix. When potential students inquire about enrolling in our program they often end up having to opt out because of this limitation. We have been successful in fitting EBOT into the interdisciplinary studies program, but we are hoping for a less burdensome option for future students who wish to include EBOT into their education.

We are working to address this situation by looking for a partner within the existing UAF programs that will consider counting one or more of our courses as eligible for their program. The initial dialogue with Alaska Native Studies did not yield fruit, but we will be revisiting this possibility with the new program leadership that is now in place. Similarly, during Spring 2015 we will be approaching the Anthropology department to suss out potential collaboration there. This process could, potentially, be enhanced when one of the current Anthropology faculty members will be developing a new ethnomycology course for EBOT during Summer 2015. We are hopeful that this can be cross-listed between our two designators, and may even be one that will become an option for Anthropology students as well. With this type of model successfully launched, it will be easier to begin finding more ways for EBOT classes to fit within existing programs at UAF.

4. Identify the faculty members involved in reaching the conclusions drawn above and agreeing upon the curricular changes resulting

EBOT faculty members: Rose Meier, Kevin Jemigan, and EBOT Advisory Board members who are UAF faculty: Pat Holloway, Mike Koskey, and adjunct faculty, Lisa Strecker.