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 was FISH 101 Introduction to Fisheries until 2013 and FISH 110 Fish and Fisheries in a Changing World since 2014. The capstone course is FISH 487 Fisheries Management. For FISH 101, there were three writing assignments, with one assignment (summary of a global fishery) serving as the course term paper. For FISH 110, there are several writing assignments, including weekly essays and a group 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 2014, only two students have completed both FISH 101/FISH 110 and FISH 487 and have graduated from the BA degree program (note that 6 students completed their BA degree since 2014, but FISH 487 was not required until catalog year 2013-2014 and therefore some graduates (4/6) did not complete this course). The mean percentile for the term paper in FISH 101/FISH 110 for these two students was 91.7% (90.7 and 92.7%). For FISH 487, the mean percentile for the term paper was 87.1% (85.4 and 88.9%). In tracking the individual scores of students, none of the two students
showed improvement in writing scores between FISH 101/FISH 110 and FISH 487. Although none of the students that completed both FISH 101/FISH 110 and FISH 487 showed improvement in their writing scores, this metric may not be reflective of their writing abilities. Because each course is taught by a different instructor, the trend in writing scores most likely is a result of differences in instructor grading rigor. In addition, the sample size (N =2) 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)

*Over the past five years in the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program, the average retention rate of students for whom data are available is 82% (range 70–100%), exceeding our program expectation of 80%.*

*Over the past five years in the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program, 85% (6/7) of students for whom data are available graduated within three years once they were juniors, which exceeds our expectation of a 50% degree-completion rate within three years. One student who did not complete his degree within three years once he was a junior was a non-traditional student who only was able to take 1-2 classes per semester due to job and family commitments.*

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)

*Since the last outcomes assessment, 75% (3/4) of students that have graduated with a B.A. in Fisheries for whom data are available have successfully secured employment, which is slightly below our program expectation of 80%. The one student that has not secured employment graduated less than a week ago and is actively looking for employment in a fisheries and aquatic sciences-related field.*

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 2014. The mean mentor evaluation score (out of 5) was 4.6, with a range from 3.5 to 5.0. A mentor evaluation score of 3.0 or higher is considered satisfactory for an entry-level fisheries professional, and all six mentor evaluation scores for student internships in the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program were better than satisfactory, which meets our goal (80%) for this metric.*
Based on responses to the exit interview survey, four graduates from the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries degree program since spring 2014 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 8 to 10, with a mean score of 8.75, indicating that all of our B.A. students for whom data are available 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.