Submit originals and one copy and electronic copy to Governance/Faculty Senate Office (email electronic copy to fysenat@uaf.edu)

PROGRAM/DEGREE REQUIREMENT CHANGE (MAJOR/MINOR)

SUBMITTED BY:

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<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>College/School</th>
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<td>GPMSL</td>
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<td>Prepared by</td>
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<td>Katrin Iken</td>
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<td>Email</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:kbiken@alaska.edu">kbiken@alaska.edu</a></td>
<td>Faculty Contact</td>
<td>Katrin Iken</td>
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See [http://www.uaf.edu/uafgov/faculty/cd](http://www.uaf.edu/uafgov/faculty/cd) for a complete description of the rules governing curriculum & course changes.

PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION:

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<tr>
<th>DEGREE PROGRAM</th>
<th>GPMSL</th>
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<tr>
<td>Degree Level:</td>
<td>(i.e., Certificate, A.A., A.A.S., B.A., B.S., M.A., M.S., Ph.D.)</td>
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A. CHANGE IN DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: (Brief statement of program/degree changes and objectives)

UAF degree requirements state that students have to earn a C grade or better (2.0) in each 600-level class to satisfy degree requirements. Our program supports a C grade in a 600-level core class as a passing grade, but the intent of this change is to require a B- grade or better in the 600-level CORE courses for students to be able to take the comprehensive exams.

B. CURRENT REQUIREMENTS AS IT APPEARS IN THE CATALOG:

Oceanography
Graduate Program -- M.S. Degree
Concentrations: Biological, Chemical, Fisheries, Geological, Physical

1. Complete the following admission requirement:
   1. Submit GRE scores.
2. Complete the general university requirements.
3. Complete the master's degree requirements.
4. Complete one of the following concentrations:
   Biological, Chemical, Geological, Physical
   1. Complete the following:
      MSL F620--Physical Oceanography--3 credits
      MSL F630--Geological Oceanography--3 credits
      MSL F650--Biological Oceanography--3 credits
      MSL F660--Chemical Oceanography--3 credits
      MSL F692--Seminar--3 credits
      MSL F699--Thesis* open
      Electives* open
   2. Minimum credits required--30 credits
      * Appropriate to area of concentration

Fisheries
3. Complete the following:
   MSL F620--Physical Oceanography--3 credits
   MSL F630--Geological Oceanography--3 credits
   MSL F640--Fisheries Oceanography--4 credits
   MSL F650--Biological Oceanography--3 credits
MSL F660--Chemical Oceanography--3 credits
MSL F692--Seminar--3 credits
MSL F699--Thesis open
Electives open
4. Minimum credits required--30 credits

C. PROPOSED REQUIREMENTS AS IT WILL APPEAR IN THE CATALOG WITH THESE CHANGES:
(Underline new wording strike through old wording and use complete catalog format)

Oceanography
Graduate Program -- M.S. Degree
Concentrations: Biological, Chemical, Fisheries, Geological, Physical
1. Complete the following admission requirement:
   1. Submit GRE scores.
2. Complete the general university requirements.
3. Complete the master's degree requirements.
4. Complete one of the following concentrations:
   Biological, Chemical, Geological, Physical **
   1. Complete the following:
      MSL F620--Physical Oceanography--3 credits
      MSL F630--Geological Oceanography--3 credits
      MSL F650--Biological Oceanography--3 credits
      MSL F660--Chemical Oceanography--3 credits
      MSL F692--Seminar--3 credits
      MSL F699--Thesis* open
      Electives* open
   2. Minimum credits required--30 credits
   * Appropriate to area of concentration

Fisheries **
3. Complete the following:
   MSL F620--Physical Oceanography--3 credits
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   MSL F640--Fisheries Oceanography--4 credits
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   MSL F660--Chemical Oceanography--3 credits
   MSL F692--Seminar--3 credits
   MSL F699--Thesis open
   Electives open
4. Minimum credits required--30 credits

* In addition, students must earn a B- (2.7) or better grade in the core courses of the degree program before being eligible to take the comprehensive exam.

D. ESTIMATED IMPACT
WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, WILL THIS HAVE ON BUDGET, FACILITIES/SPACE, FACULTY, ETC.
The proposed action does not have an impact on the budget, facilities or faculty. Core courses for the GPMSL MS Oceanography degree program are offered every year, which will not change with the requested change.
E. IMPACTS ON PROGRAMS/DEPTS:

What programs/departments will be affected by this proposed action?
Include information on the Programs/Departments contacted (e.g., email, memo)

The GPMSL will be affected by this action, specifically the MS in Oceanography. Students will be required to earn a B- or better grade in the degree-specific core courses in order to take the comprehensive exams. Should a student not earn a B- or better grade in a core course, the student will have to repeat the respective core course until they earn the required minimum grade.

F. IF MAJOR CHANGE – ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAM:

Description of the student learning outcomes assessment process.)

This is considered a minor degree change. This change will not change the student learning outcomes and their assessment process. The required change is in line with the existing student learning outcome assessment for the program.

JUSTIFICATION FOR ACTION REQUESTED

The purpose of the department and campus-wide curriculum committees is to scrutinize program/degree change applications to make sure that the quality of UAF education is not lowered as a result of the proposed change. Please address this in your response. This section needs to be self-explanatory. If you drop a course, is it because the material is covered elsewhere? Use as much space as needed to fully justify the proposed change and explain what has been done to ensure that the quality of the program is not compromised as a result.

While it is not a frequent occurrence that a graduate student earns a C+ or worse grade in a core course, the occasional experience in past years has shown that students who do not earn at least a B- grade in a core course are not able to pass the comprehensive exam. This indicates that students with less than a B- grade did not successfully and sufficiently comprehend the core material to fulfill the purpose of the comprehensive exams: The GPMSL programs outcomes assessment plan states that “All students must pass a written Comprehensive Exam after the completion of their core courses to assess their broad disciplinary knowledge, their ability to apply that knowledge to interdisciplinary problems in the marine sciences, and their in-depth knowledge of the field of specialization”.

After discussion the GPMSL faculty decided that requiring a B- or better grade in 600-level core courses is a necessary prerequisite to minimize the potential for comprehensive exam failure. It seems prudent to give students the opportunity to learn and comprehend the knowledge necessary to successfully complete the degree before they fail at the comprehensive exam level. Students can only take the comprehensive exam twice before they have to leave the program, while there is no limitation to re-taking core classes. The GPMSL faculty feel that this requested degree change is in the best interest for our students to ensure that they successfully complete the degree.
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<th>Date</th>
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**ALL SIGNATURES MUST BE OBTAINED PRIOR TO SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNANCE OFFICE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature, Chair, UAF Faculty Senate Curriculum Review Committee</th>
<th>Date</th>
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