

Submission date: 2/12/2020

Program/s in this review: Alutiiq Language OEC

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable):

Campuses where the program is delivered: Kodiak College

Members of the program review committee:

- Elizabeth (Libby) Eufemio, Assistant Professor of AKNS, Kodiak College

**1. Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role (700 words or less)**

**Relevancy of the program**

The mission of the Alutiiq Studies Program's Alutiiq Language Occupational Endorsement Certificate (OEC), is to provide career preparation and professional development rooted in Alutiiq culture and values, while recognizing the acquisition of Alutiiq language skills and knowledge through certification for Alutiiq language professionals and paraprofessionals. Students must complete a minimum of 16 credits; four required courses (AKNS A101E Elementary Alutiiq I, AKNS A102E Elementary Alutiiq II, AKNS A109D Alutiiq Orthography, & AKNS A292B AK Native Conversational Fluency Intensive) and either AKNS A240 AK Native Cultural Orientation – Alutiiq/Sugpiaq or AKNS A292A AK Native Language Apprenticeship. Students learn basic Alutiiq writing, reading and grammar, achieve an Intermediate Low conversational speaking proficiency (ACTFL scale), and gain understanding of Alutiiq culture, Indigenous language endangerment and language revitalization strategies. It is a culturally relevant, place based program, developed in partnership with tribal and community members.

**Role in supporting other academic programs**

The Alutiiq Language OEC supports other UAA academic programs by satisfying most (60%) of the requirements for the UAA Alaska Native Studies minor (Language Focus), and by fulfilling many of the requirements for the forthcoming AA in Alaska Native Studies. The courses also satisfy the Alaska Native-Theme General Education requirement for 2019-2020.

**Specific workforce development and employment opportunities relevant to the program**

This OEC provides employment opportunities in language revitalization programs in regional tribes and educational organizations, and in tribal workforce enterprises, such as cultural tourism. Acquiring this OEC also qualifies students to apply for "Type M" teaching certification in Alutiiq Instruction in the Kodiak Island Borough School District (KIBSD).

**Sources of extramural support and funding for the program**

The Alutiiq Studies Program and Alutiiq Language OEC were initially funded through a US Dept. of Education Title III grant awarded to Kodiak College, titled *Alutiiq Studies & Student Support*, from AY2011/12 to AY2015/16, with a no-cost extension through October 2017. The grant funded curriculum and policy development, culturally appropriate physical space improvements (Gathering spaces, Language Lab/Sound Booth, campus signage, Woodshop traditional arts tools & supplies), and staffing (a Term Asst. Professor of Alaska Native Studies, and other key positions including a Native Student Advisor and Adjunct language instructors).

Since then, no other direct financial support to the Alutiiq Language OEC has been provided by outside sources, yet many organizations provide scholarship support directly to students. Kodiak Education Foundation routinely awards financial support to Alutiiq students taking OEC courses. Kodiak's Alutiiq Museum and the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak consider OEC offerings relevant to their mission and offer scholarship support to employees who take job-relevant coursework. Education students are funded to take OEC coursework through the *Munartet Grant* (a partnership supporting teaching in and through the arts and culture of Kodiak, in partnership between Kodiak College, KIBSD, Alutiiq Museum, Kodiak Arts Council, & AK State Council on the Arts).

### **Partnerships with outside agencies, businesses, organizations**

The Alutiiq Studies Program has consistently strong community and statewide support. Kodiak High School/KIBSD partners with Kodiak College offering Dual Enrollment Alutiiq Language classes (Alutiiq I & Alutiiq II). The statewide Alaska Native Studies Council and local *Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit* Regional Language Advisory Committee provide guidance; Elder committee members volunteer in courses. The Native Village of Afognak partners on projects developing business incubators & workforce development services as catalyst tools for regional economic development. Sun'aq Tribe hires students to work in the region's first Alutiiq language Immersion Preschool, *Alutiit'stun Niuwawik*. Finally, the program partners with Regional Native Corporation Chugachmiut, Inc., under their US Dept. of Education/AK Native Education Program grant, *LlangaRkllu: Becoming Aware*; their staff is paid to earn Alutiiq Language OEC's and work on their AA degrees as well.

### **Any high demand job designation**

Demand is increasing in Alutiiq language professions, and skilled workers can earn \$20 hourly or higher, based on educational qualifications and skills. For example, the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak recently sought recommendations for Alutiiq Studies Program students to work in paid language outreach in KIBSD K-2 classrooms this semester. Outside of the Kodiak region, Chugachmiut, Inc. has hired OEC students and graduates to be lead Alutiiq language instructors and substitute language teachers in classrooms in the villages of Nanwalek, Port Graham, Cordova, and Tatitlek.

## **2. Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity (7 year trend; 1400 words or less)**

**Data Points - Degree Awards – Seven year degree and/or certificate awards trend/Credits per Degree;** The Alutiiq Studies Program's OEC in Alutiiq Language is a very new entity, only beginning to establish its signature language and culture courses beginning in 2011, yet it has graduated a total of 10 students in two classes, in 2015 and 2018. Both graduating classes took approximately 5 semesters of coursework to complete their certificates which is accurately reflected in the Semesters per Degree column of the Graduating Efficiency Measures.

Some numbers in the Years per Degree column are not accurate however. This is most likely ascribable to the fact that previous students could only take Alutiiq language when sporadically offered, and under an old numbering system (in 1995 as AKNS A180 Introductory Alutiiq). The program graduated its first six OEC students in 2015. The majority of these six were able to complete their coursework in five semesters (including Summer session), however some had credits extending back to that 1995 course, thereby skewing the Years in Degree to 11.8 years for that graduating group. The 2018 group holds a more accurate Years in Degree of 3.5.

In 2018 the OEC graduated its second cohort, of four students. Both graduating classes exceeded the required 16 credits of coursework for graduating (with an average of 26.8 credits per degree), for most students elected

to take not one, but both of the two elective courses (AKNS A240 and AKNS A292A). This cohort also worked on their AA degrees. These two issues are reflected in the Credits per Degree column, with an average of 26.8 credits for all graduates.

The total number of 2018 graduates, while technically accurate, does not include two other students from within that cohort, who would have officially graduated, but for non-OEC related issues. These two students could not be included in the graduation statistics, as their overall GPA's (from prior poor college track records) rendered them ineligible to receive their OEC certificates with the rest of their class. It should be noted that culturally relevant learning opportunities really do matter, and serve to bring out the best in students – their OEC coursework GPA's were excellent, at 4.0 and 3.2. They are currently working on raising their overall GPAs, and will officially receive their certificates at that time.

As well, there are a few high school students who are credits away from earning their OEC's. They can only officially enroll in the program once they have graduated from high school, but we anticipate adding them to the list of graduates in the near future. Finally, it should be noted that of the 10 total OEC graduates, 9 (or 90%) are Alaska Native students. And of the 32 students who have historically or are currently enrolled in the OEC since 2014, over 78% are Alaska Native.

**Data Point – Course Pass Rates;** For all AKNS courses at Kodiak College, the seven year course pass rate is meaningful, at approximately three quarters. The number exceeds this when selecting the courses which fall within the Alutiiq Language OEC – this pass rate is considerable at 78.1%. Students are not only passing their OEC courses, they are earning high grades and they are meeting their learning outcomes.

**Data Point – Majors;** Some data is missing from this category, as the IR records only span 2016-2019, and do not include those who enrolled in the OEC from 2014 and 2015. What data is presented reflects normal numbers for a new and growing program, whose students enjoy taking the first course or two in the sequence, yet hesitate to enroll in the full program, often due to time and budgetary constraints.

**Data Point – Internal Demand;** Students taking courses in the Alutiiq Studies Program's OEC in Alutiiq Language are for the most part Out of Major. Many students want an introduction to the Alutiiq language and culture, yet do not have the opportunity or time to continue with a full OEC. As well, some of the data in this category is influenced by one course, AKNS A240 AK Native Cultural Orientation – Alutiiq/Sugpiaq, which is also a State of Alaska approved initial teacher and continuing education certification course, and popular with current teachers and education majors. Outside of Alutiiq Language students, students in 29 other majors/programs have taken these OEC courses, which is a testament to the broad appeal of these classes. This trend should continue with UAA's new requirement for Alaska Native-Themed electives.

**Data Point – Instructional Productivity;**

**SCH (Seven year Student Credit Hour)** – Over the life of the Alutiiq Language OEC, student credit hours have generally remained stable, ranging from 148-162 SCH, between 2013 – 2016. A huge jump of over 80% SCH in 2017, and a similar number in 2018, are a result of the second OEC Alutiiq Language cohort, which graduated in 2018. The majority of students in this 2017/2018 cohort were funded through their regional Native Corporation to work on their OEC and AA degrees simultaneously.

**FTS/FTEF, CLASS SIZE, SCH/FTEF, & Enroll/FTEF** – Numbers reported in these categories are generally uniform, except for the data from 2013, which seems anomalous. This data was submitted by a past program director, before the new program coordinator took over in 2016, and it cannot be accounted for.

In general however, as a new and growing program, class size, course availability and overall number of students have fluctuated as would be expected with growth. As a community campus, small class size is a given, as compared to numbers from much larger urban centers, and is viewed in a positive light by students who expect individual and personal attention. Additionally, the majority of students at Kodiak College are enrolled as non-degree seeking students. This has been the case historically and will continue to be the norm for our students.

For the most part, since 2013 one Term Professor (at 50%) and one Adjunct instructor provided all paid instruction. It should be noted that in AY 16/17, the Language Adjunct exceeded the allowed number of credits taught, and was made Term for that year only. Also five to ten Alutiiq Elders provide hours of free language consultation to the program, particularly to the Intensive and Apprenticeship courses. As well there are a number of second generation language learners who also serve in this capacity. Their contribution cannot be seen on this data point.

**Include the extent to which tuition, fees, extramural funding, and other external sources cover the cost of the faculty.**

The Alutiiq Studies Program at Kodiak College was created under a US Dept. of Education Title III grant, which until September 2017, provided half of the funding for the Term Professor position (Asst. Professor of Alaska Native Studies). After the grant ended, this position became institutionalized at Kodiak College, and continued to include administering the program and teaching AKNS courses (50%), and teaching ANTH courses (50%). Additionally, the program has historically employed on average one Adjunct language instructor per semester.

For example, in AY18/19, thirty-three students took AKNS courses in the Alutiiq Language OEC, generating \$23,214 in tuition and fees. During this time, the Adjunct Instructor cost was \$8,239.56, and 50% of the Term Professor cost was \$42,916.36, totaling \$51,155.92. Therefore 45% of faculty cost was covered by tuition and fees in AY18/19. This number does not include the many unpaid hours donated by Alutiiq Elders and culture bearers to the program.

**3. Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success (1500 words or less)**

The Alutiiq Language OEC is unique in the state and provides an innovative program design, as the majority of courses (5 out of 6) are available simultaneously as both face-to-face and distance instruction (via video conference/Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate). Enabling learners to participate from their communities, as well as from campus, has proven key in attracting students to the program, and expands the program's reach well past Kodiak City. Students have participated in classes from their home villages in the Kodiak Archipelago, Prince William Sound, Kenai Peninsula, and Bristol Bay; in cities like Anchorage and Fairbanks; and from various places in the Continental United States. OEC course Instructors have participated in enrichment workshops to provide quality distance education (AI&E Engaging UAA Students in Culturally Responsive eLearning; IYOC Independent Improving Your Online Course).

Program Assessment has been completed yearly since AY15/16 (reflecting a change in Program leadership). Since 2016, assessment plans have been reviewed and reformulated, some learning outcomes have been slightly revised, and better assessment techniques have been implemented. Yearly Assessment Reports show that Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) are being met. For example, in AY18/19, six OEC courses were offered, with a pass rate of over 92% and average grade of 3.35. In that year, students met their learning outcomes, with Outcome 2 making outstanding progress, Outcome 3 making significant progress, and Outcome 4 making remarkable progress.

In 2018 the Alutiiq Studies Program received a NASNTI (Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution) grant from WICHE titled, *Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for AK Native & American Indian Students at Kodiak College*. One focus of the grant was to employ a high impact educational practice, ePortfolios, into the program. A culturally appropriate ePortfolio template was developed for the program and is now implemented in all OEC courses.

The Alutiiq Studies Program is of high quality and has become valuable to the Alutiiq language revitalization movement, as well as becoming an integral part of Kodiak College and the greater community. Native speakers interact with learners. One student (and 2015 graduate) shared the following; "I have had the privilege and honor to be a part of the Alutiiq Studies community in a variety of capacities. I have graduated from the program, worked as a colleague with staff and participants, served as an Alutiiq language teacher and learner...I have witnessed individuals who were students in my classroom gain the confidence and linguistic ability to serve as immersion teachers in our community. Success like this would not be possible without the Alutiiq Studies Program."

#### **4. Program Duplication / Distinctiveness (300 words or less)**

This program is unique to UAA and to all UA schools. Kodiak College is the only UAA institution offering Alutiiq language classes. While various language courses (Yup'ik, Tlingit, Inupiaq, Dena'ina, Ahtna) are taught at the UAA Anchorage campus and Kenai Peninsula College, only Kodiak College offers an OEC in any Alaska Native language. Additionally, the majority of Alutiiq language and culture courses in the OEC (5/6) are available to distance students. The majority of Alaska Native language classes offered at UAA are not.

As well, UA schools elsewhere in the State do not offer a similar program. UAS Juneau offers only a minor in Tlingit language (18 credits) and no OEC language options. UAF offers Certificates in both Yup'ik Language Proficiency, and Native Language Education (with concentrations in Athabascan, Inupiaq, or Yup'ik), yet they are not OEC's, both requiring a substantial number of credits (30).

#### **5. Summary Analysis (500 words or less)**

The Alutiiq Language OEC meets key goals put forth by Kodiak College, UAA, and the greater UA system. It complements the mission statement for Kodiak College, which is to put students first through innovative teaching, individualized learning, and responsive service to community needs. It also fulfills some of the college's Strategic Directions, including developing training opportunities to support workforce development, advance understanding of Kodiak's rich heritage through engaged learning and meaningful community partnerships, and to support student diversity that reflects our diverse community.

The language OEC also builds on the worldwide awareness of Indigenous language endangerment, and reflects UAA's 2020 focus on the importance of cultural diversity, and respect for linguistic distinctiveness. It falls directly in line with two major recommendations put forth in UAA's recent *Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)*; to target underrepresented populations (and specifically plan with a singular focus on Alaska Natives), and to diversify the curriculum (by stressing basic knowledge of Alaska and its Indigenous peoples). The DIAP also recognizes AK Native languages as an important resource for supporting student success and feelings of inclusion.

Finally the Alutiiq Language OEC meets UA's mission statement, which is in part, to inspire learning emphasizing the North and its diverse peoples. It meets many of the Themes developed in UA's *Shaping*

*Alaska's Future*; recognizing that UA graduates reflect the diversity of Alaska, striving to fully engage with AK Native Corporations, tribal governments, and others to meet the educational needs of AK Native peoples, to promote AK Native student success, and to support AK Native economic and cultural development.

The Alutiiq Language OEC at Kodiak College meets these goals locally, within the greater UAA system, and statewide. It will continue to serve as a sign to youth that Alutiiq language and culture has relevance, both in academia and in the greater community. Earning this degree can not only serve to support revitalization efforts, but provide useful job-training to meet local employment demands.