



Date: February 21, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Cc: Diane Hanson, Associate Professor  
Sally Carraher, Assistant Professor

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

**Program/s in this review:** Anthropology MA

**Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable):** None

**Campuses where the program is delivered:** Anchorage

**Members of the program review committee:**

Diane Hanson, Associate Professor  
Sally Carraher, Assistant Professor

### **Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role**

UAA's mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement and creative expression. UAA is committed to serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities and its diverse peoples. It is also committed to instruction at multiple academic levels, success of all students regardless of their higher education goals, and service to the diverse peoples and communities of the state. UAA's core themes are (1) Teaching and Learning, (2) Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity, (3) Student Success, (4) UAA Community, and (5) Public Square. UAA values international and intercultural education, diversity of experiences and perspectives, and the diversity of our unique location in Southcentral Alaska that comes from the Alaska Native peoples of this area.

The College of Arts and Sciences contributes to UAA's mission with a suite of programs that provide, among other things,

1. general education courses for undergraduates in CAS and other Colleges,
2. opportunities for undergraduates to pursue majors in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and the arts, and

3. opportunities for faculty and students to pursue research and creative activities in CAS's academic disciplines,
4. graduate programs for advanced studies.

Given decreased enrollments across UAA and significant budget cuts to CAS, the challenge is to serve UAA's and CAS's missions with only 75% of the funds it had in 2018-2019. CAS's shrinking budget is especially challenging for programs that rely on state financial appropriations through CAS because the programs have a gap between (a) the total costs of everything the program does and needs, and (b) the tuition CAS receives to cover those costs. This describes most programs in CAS: most rely on state appropriates and CAS has 30% less than it had two years ago.

The CAS's Department of Anthropology MA contributes to CAS's and UAA's mission with graduate-level disciplinary content that easily ties to the history and culture of Alaska generally and Southcentral Alaska in particular, and with faculty whose research focuses on regional issues. The program's graduate student theses almost invariably focus on Alaska's culture and its heritage.

### **Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity**

For a number of reasons, the program has experienced declining demand: the number of graduate majors is down, and student credit hours are down. Consequently, the gap between tuition and instructional costs remain high, program tuition does not cover the program's instructional costs, and the number of awards granted (typically 3-6 per year) is well below the average (13.8) and median (11.4) of CAS's masters programs. Overall, the Anthropology Department was unable to cover all of its costs with its BA/BS program and its MA program because the MA does not have enough students and tuition to cover its costs.

### **Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success**

In the past several years the program replaced retired senior faculty with a new generation who made a point of revising the program, decreasing the time to graduation and improving student success.

### **Program Duplication / Distinctiveness**

UAF has both a MA and PhD in Anthropology. At the masters level, UAA's program and UAF's program produce fewer than 10 awards per year (with comparable numbers at each university). Combined, the number of masters degrees in Anthropology is modest and below the median number of awards (11) in CAS's masters programs. Although there are differences with UAF's MA in Anthropology, there are overlaps, as well, and the combined number of UAA + UAF degrees suggest that two masters programs in this discipline might be too much.

### **Commendations and Recommendations**

The program is commended for revisions in recent years that improved student success and for a program that focuses so much on Alaska and its people. The faculty should also be commended for the hard work they put into their expedited program review submission.

### **Decision**

Deletion: Deleting this program will affect relatively few students and will help with the long term sustainability of the BA/BS program. With this deletion the number of full-time faculty should eventually be reduced to four. Program deletion requires approval by BOR and NWCCU.