

Submission date: February 11, 2020

Program/s in this review: Graduate Certificate in Language Education

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE); currently pursuing Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP); Specialty Program Review (SPA) through Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

Campuses where the program is delivered: Anchorage and via distance

Members of the program review committee:

Cathy Coulter, Professor

### 1. Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role

**The relevancy of the program.** Alaska is a state of incredible diversity. There are over 100 different language groups represented in Alaskan schools. In fact, the Diversity Index documents that Anchorage School District (ASD), has 19 of the top 20 most diverse elementary schools in the nation; six of the ten most diverse middle schools in the nation, and three of the ten most diverse high schools in the nation (Tunseth, 2015). Over 20% of the students in ASD—nearly 10,000—are either in or have been in the English language learner program in the district. Other districts in the state also serve large numbers of ELLs. In all, there are over 17,000 English language learners (ELLs) in the state of Alaska. Included in this number are thousands of Alaska Native children whose rich linguistic backgrounds qualify them for ELL services, which in turns provides opportunities for well-trained teachers to address language revitalization in service of reversing the threat of extinction of Alaska Native languages.

The growth of diverse populations has outpaced UA's capacity to train teachers to meet the needs of English learners in preK-12 classrooms. The Language Education Program helps meet the local and statewide needs. This program increases the numbers of well-trained classroom teachers of ELLs in preK-12 settings by training school leaders and other school personal and by sustaining the capabilities of program completers in affecting instructional improvements within Alaska's classrooms.

The 2019 PEAKS scores disaggregated for English learners show that 90.1% fall *below proficient or far below proficient* in language arts and 86.96% fall *below proficient or far below proficient* in math.

Correspondingly, fewer than 4% of Alaska's teachers have an endorsement to teach ELLs. This program addresses the need for teacher training in supporting the academic achievement of ELLs in K-12 schools.

**Role the program plays in supporting other academic programs.** The Language Education program is an 18-credit Graduate Certificate program that results in an endorsement to teach English as a Second Language in preK-6 (in process to expand to preK-12) classrooms. The program aligns with the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning program such that graduates from the Language Education program can streamline directly into the M.Ed. with a focus on teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). Graduates of the Language Education program need an additional 12 credits to obtain the M.Ed. More, the action research project Language Education candidates complete leads into the research project required for the M.Ed. program. There is potential for collaborative programming with M.Ed. programs at UAF and UAS.

**Partnerships with outside agencies, businesses, or organizations.** The Language Education program has close interactions with district coordinators of English learner programs, and other administrators across the State. This collaboration allows us to work together on various aspects of program administration including recruitment, curricula, and meeting the unique needs of each district. District partners have taught as adjuncts and/or guest instructors in our classes, and they support field experience placements for UA undergraduate programs.

**Any specific workforce development and employment opportunities.** As stated above, there is a high need for teachers trained to meet the academic and linguistic needs of English language learners. In addition to general education teachers, our graduates are ELL case managers, principals, mentors, lead teachers, and curriculum coordinators in districts across the State. Districts across the State have a need to increase the number of classroom teachers who are highly qualified to meet the needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classrooms. In short, every teacher in Alaska could benefit from this training.

**Any sources of extramural support and funding for the program.** In 2013, UAA received a \$1.75 million grant (Project LEAP) from the Department of Education to support student tuition toward completion of the Language Education program. Project LEAP funding went primarily toward tuition with UAA getting over \$1 million of the funds in tuition, course buyouts, supplies (e.g. a multicultural children's book library), and F & A. The U.S. Department of Education has issued a forecast of funding opportunities that includes 44 new National Professional Development Grants from the Office of English Language Acquisition to be announced in 2020. We intend to apply for new grant funding. An additional source of funding exists with fund-matching opportunities with rural school districts. For example, we have four students from Bering Straits School District (BSSD) who are benefitting from fund-matching opportunities in which the School of Education matches scholarship funding for students whose districts provide funding for their coursework. This kind of partnership can help build and sustain enrollments.

**High demand job designation.** As noted above, with the high number of ELLs in the State of Alaska, all teachers in Alaska need training in addressing the academic achievement and language needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classrooms, including ways to revitalize native language and culture for our Alaska Native populations.

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

The IR website generates data tables used to examine program demand, efficiency, and productivity. Each data point is reviewed and analyzed below.

### a. Data Point: Seven-year degree and/or certificate awards trends.

The seven-year certificate award trend reflects some fluctuation. From 2014-2018 there was an 176% increase in enrollment. This increase was due to the \$1.75 million National Professional Development grant, from the Office of English Language Acquisition, called Project LEAP, which provided tuition support for participants. Project LEAP supported its final cohort in 2017, and in order to close out the grant and transition to a sustainable program, the program did not run a cohort in 2018. Because the program runs on a Spring-Summer-Fall trajectory, the numbers reported in IR are slightly behind, such that the 2018 numbers (n=34) represent our 2017 cohort. The 2019 number (n=2) reflects the one-year suspension in enrollment in 2018. In 2019, we began recruitment for a cohort to begin in Spring 2020. At this time, Spring 2020, there are nine students enrolled in the program. Given that the current cohort is not grant supported, we are confident that continued recruitment efforts will allow us to continue to increase enrollment, even without grant support. The State of Alaska's current focus on reading achievement speaks to increased possibilities for recruitment, especially with the disaggregated PEAKS scores indicating that over 90% of English learners in Alaska score *below or far below proficient* in Language Arts. We continue to search for ways to financially support our students, who as practicing teachers often struggle to afford graduate studies.

### b. Data Point: Credits Per Degree (Average Credits Earned)

The Graduate Certificate in Language Education requires 18 credits. The average credits/degree over the seven-year period was 19.9. Some of our candidates elect to complete the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning simultaneously, which accounts for the credits per degree that are over the 18-required credits.

c. Data Point: Seven year majors or program enrollment trend

The Language Education program has experienced some fluctuation in enrollment. As noted above, the growth and decline in numbers are due to the \$1.75 million National Professional Development Grant from the Office of English Language Acquisition. From 2013-2014 there was a sharp increase in enrollment, which continued in an upward trend until 2017 at which time the funding source ended. In 2018, we did not accept any new candidates into the program as we transitioned from Project LEAP to a self-sustaining program. This accounts for the drop in 2019. Due to current recruitment efforts, the program is growing. For example, in January 2020, we enrolled four students from Bering Straits School District (BSSD) through a scholarship-matching program in which districts provide funds for coursework, and School of Education scholarship money matches those funds. We have a new cohort of nine students, with many others expressing interest. We continue to seek out grant funding for classroom teachers to gain the training they need to address the needs of English language learners in their classrooms, such as the National Professional Development grant from the Office of English Language Acquisition (same funding source as Project LEAP), which has indicated that it will publish a new call for proposals in 2020.

d. Course Pass Rates

In order to determine course pass rates for the Language Education program, we pulled data corresponding to the following six courses, which comprise the 18-credit Language Education program: EDFN 621, EDFN 645, EDFN 646, EDFN 689, EDFN 691, and EDSY 668 (please note that EDFN 692 was included in the provided data tables, but it is *not* a course in the Language Education program whereas EDSY 668 is a required course, but was excluded from the provided data. All discussions in this section are based on the corrected data). The average pass-rate within this seven-year period was 95.2%. We attribute this high rate to the dialogic emphasis in coursework in which instructors provide ongoing feedback on assignments with the expectation that candidates engage in a rigorous revision process. This pass-rate exceeds the UAA 7-year average pass-rate of 600-level courses of 89%. These data demonstrate that both faculty and students strive for excellence.

e. Data Point: Internal Demand

Data indicate that the Language Education program provides significant service to students outside the major, with 247 students outside of the UAA Language Education degree program benefitting from taking our courses. Approximately 25% of the SCH earned in 600-level language education courses were generated by students outside of the major. Instructors' observations indicate a presence of international students as well as other SOE graduate students, practicing teachers who seek professional development, and an occasional student from UAF or UAS.

f. Data Point: Seven year Student Credit Hour (SCH) production trend

The Student Credit Hour (SCH) production trend follows the same pattern as enrollment data (see Data Point c above). Grant support buoyed SCH from 2014-2018. In consideration of State need for literacy instruction for English learners, recruitment without grant support resumed in 2019 (see also discussion for "Seven Year Majors or Program Enrollment Trend").

g. Data Point: SCH/FTEF

Data from courses with the Language Education program demonstrate an efficient program. The average SCH/FTEF for the seven-year period for the Language Education program was 400.4, as compared to 187.3 for all of CAS's 600-level courses during the same time period. This indicates that the program runs efficiently.

h. Data Point: Enrollment/Full Time Equivalent Faculty

In 2019, 68 students enrolled per FTEF in the Language Education program. This can be compared to 59.1 for all 600-level CAS courses. The average Enrollment/FTEF for the Language Education program in the seven-year period is 133.6 as compared to 65.9 Enrollment/FTEF for all 600-level CAS courses. This average includes both grant-funded and non-grant funded enrollment. It is another indicator of the efficiency of the Language Education program.

i. Data Point: FTES/FTEF

Data from the Language Education program show that it is an efficient program. The FTES/FTEF in 2019 (a non-grant funded year) for the Language Education program was 8.5 as compared to CAS's all-600 level course FTES/FTEF for 2019 of 7.3. The average for the 7-year period for Language Education was 16.7 as compared to 7.8 for all 600-level courses in CAS.

j. Data point: Class Size (Average Class Size)

The average class size during the 7-year period was 13.3. The average for all 600-level CAS courses for the same time period was 7.4. Data indicates that class size for the Language Education program is at least on par with CAS's overall average for 600-level courses, even during non-grant years.

k. Data Point: Cost/SCH

The average Cost/SCH for the Language Education program during the 5-year period for which there are data was \$610.12 as compared to CAS's 600-level course average of \$746.66. It is significant that one of those five years the Language Education program did not have a cohort enrolled (2018, reflected in the 2019 data). As we rebuild enrollment, the cost of the Language Education program remains below the CAS average.

l. Data Point: Tuition Revenue/SCH

Tuition Revenue/SCH for the Language Education program during the 5 years for which we have data is \$439.34 as compared to the 600-level courses at \$440.26. The Language Education program is comparable to other CAS programs in Tuition Revenue/SCH.

m. Data Point: External Demand

According to the Education Commission of the States, there are 17,026 English language learners (ELLs) in Alaskan schools (Zinth, 2013). ELLs do not fare well on achievement testing, with national test scores falling in line with Alaska's PEAKS scores (90.1% falls *below or far below proficient* in Language Arts, 86.96% in math). Yet, according to Zinth (2013), "Many general classroom teachers lack the specific knowledge and skills to bring ELL's to proficiency in the four domains for language acquisition." One way to bring up the achievement scores in Alaska is to train general education teachers in addressing the academic needs of the ELLs in their classrooms. There is a high external demand for ESL-Endorsed teachers in Alaska, which the Language Education program provides.

### 3. Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success

**Specialized accreditation process and status.** The Language Education program is currently NCATE Accredited. From AY2013-AY2017 the Language Education program underwent a rigorous annual review process through the Department of Education grant, Project LEAP (Language, Equity, and Academic Achievement). Institutional

Review Board (IRB) approval was procured. Data included key assessments (evaluated using rubrics), surveys, student artifacts (assignments), interviews, and classroom observations. Data were collected, analyzed, and reported to the grantor via Annual Performance Reports and the Final Performance Report. External evaluators analyzed data and reviewed the reports for quality and gave suggestions for program improvements. As the program transitions from Project LEAP to the regular Graduate Certificate program we are preparing our first Specialized Program Accreditation (SPA) for TESOL and collecting data for our CAEP review report, which we will submit in 2021. Application for TESOL national recognition will be made March 14, 2020.

**Currency of the curriculum.** The Language Education program is centered in the newest research on Culturally Sustaining and Revitalizing Pedagogies (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014, 2017; McCarty & Lee, 2014) through which students learn to support language and culture revitalization alongside academic achievement. We also incorporate Alaska Native epistemologies as an avenue to understanding how different cultural ways of knowing impact academic achievement and, subsequently, implications for and transformation of classroom practice. Finally, our scholarly practitioner model supports our students in being able to access and analyze the latest research as well as engage in research of their own.

**Innovative Program Design.** Alaska is a unique context, requiring innovation in program design. The Language Education program serves teachers in districts from very diverse urban contexts such as Anchorage School District, whose students represent more than 100 different language groups, to villages in which Alaska Native cultures and languages are threatened. Several areas of emphasis, or strands, run through the Language Education program: 1) culturally sustaining pedagogies; 2) science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and 3) teacher action research. Each strand is woven through activities, discussion, readings and assignments in each course. The program culminates in an action research project in which candidates apply program learning to their own unique classroom practice.

**Availability and indications of quality distance offerings (e.g., Quality Matters, C-RAC standards, etc.).** The entire Language Education program is offered online (with face-to-face sections offered pending enrollment). Two of our three faculty members are UAA Technology Fellows, and two have worked through Quality Matters to improve their distance course offerings. Courses in our program follow National ISTE Standards.

**Program Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

Program Student Learning Outcome (PSLO)	Methods used to assess the outcome	Key findings	Major actions taken to improve student learning and evidence of their impact
Demonstrate understanding of language as a system and demonstrate a high level of competence in helping language learners acquire and use the new language in speaking, reading, and writing for social and academic purposes.	Student assignments including Action Research Study, Case Study with Assessments and Instructional Plan, Classroom Activities & Discussions; scoring via rubric with content validity and inter-rater reliability checks  Classroom Observations  Surveys and Interviews of Completers	Classroom observations of early cohorts indicated the need for better skills in supporting academic language needs of EL’s  Later cohorts showed improvement in ability to scaffold academic language in content area classrooms	Modified assignments in two classes to include Tiers 1-3 vocabulary through the LIST Inquiry instrument  Modified three courses (EDFN 645, EDSY 668, EDFN 646) to reinforce explicit instruction in supporting academic vocabulary
Understand and apply concepts, theories, research,	Student assignments including Curricular	Students show an increasingly refined ability	Increased time given for collaboration among

<p>and practice to facilitate the acquisition of a primary and a new language in and out of classroom settings.</p>	<p>Framework/Unit Plan, Case Study, and Action Research; scoring via rubric with content validity and inter-rater reliability checks</p> <p>Classroom Observations</p> <p>Surveys and Interviews of Completers</p>	<p>to access research and apply it to classroom practice related to language acquisition and content learning.</p> <p>Fostering collaboration and workshop models in research facilitated community-based learning with students taking the lead in finding and utilizing research in classroom practice</p>	<p>students to share and support one another in their inquiry and curricula processes</p>
<p>Know, understand and use the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to the nature and role of culture in language development and academic achievement that support an individual student’s learning and apply this knowledge to improve teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Student assignments including Culture Paper, Literature Circle, Multicultural Children’s Literature Annotated Bibliography, Case Study; scoring via rubric with content validity and inter-rater reliability checks</p> <p>Classroom Observations</p> <p>Surveys and Interviews of Completers</p>	<p>Students show an increasingly refined sense of ways in which cultural ways of knowing affect learning</p> <p>Students rearrange classroom practice to reflect different epistemologies, therefore meeting the academic needs of all students</p>	<p>Increased focus on epistemological differences and how children are affected by the differences, particularly using examples from participants’ classrooms</p>
<p>Know, understand, and use knowledge of how cultural groups and students’ cultural identities affect language learning and school achievement.</p>	<p>Student assignments such as the Culture Paper, Case Study Annotated Bibliography, Action Research Study, in class discussions and activities; scoring via rubric with content validity and inter-rater reliability checks</p> <p>Classroom Observations</p> <p>Surveys and Interviews of Completers</p>	<p>Students learn that their current classroom structure may be obstructive to meeting the learning needs of ELLs and Alaska Native students</p>	<p>Utilized the ongoing research of students to increase understanding of the impact and needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students</p>
<p>Know, understand, and apply concepts from research to plan instruction in a supportive learning environment for language learners.</p>	<p>Student assignments including the Annotated Bibliography, Literature Review, Science Unit; scoring via rubric with content validity and inter-rater reliability checks</p> <p>Classroom Observations</p>	<p>By participating in the Action Research project, review of the literature, and modification of the science unit, students learn about innovative practice and the latest research and modify their practice accordingly</p>	<p>N/A</p>

	Surveys and Interviews of Completers		
Understand various issues of measurement (e.g., equity; cultural and linguistic bias; and political, social, and psychological factors) in assessment, IQ, and special education testing; the importance of standards; and the difference between language proficiency and other types of assessment.	Student assignments including the Case Study and Curricular Framework/Unit; scoring via rubric with content validity and inter-rater reliability checks  Classroom Observations  Surveys and Interviews of Completers	By completing the various components of the case study, action research study, and curricular modifications, students are able to see the ways in which their students are mistakenly leveled and placed inappropriately based on the intrinsic bias within various formal and standardized assessments	N/A
Serve as a professional advocate and resource for language learners and the community.	Student assignments such as the Culture Paper, Science Kit/Curricula Modifications for ELLs, Review of Literature, Discussion Board, Action Research Project; scoring via rubric with content validity and inter-rater reliability checks  Classroom Observations  Surveys and Interviews of Completers	Students report increased participation with communities and as leaders in staff development activities.	Highlighted the activities of past participants as examples of things current students can consider becoming a part of: community-based projects, district leadership, and leaders of staff development.

**Student Success: High Impact Practice** Language Education students participate in several different high impact practices including research, curricula adaptation through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and academic language through STEM-based content. A research strand is incorporated throughout the course sequence such that students engage in a deepening knowledge about current language and literacy acquisition theories, how to evaluate research studies, how to do a review of the literature, and how to engage in data collection, analysis, and reporting. In a summer intensive, students work together in PLC's to adapt curricula to better meet the academic needs of English learners and Alaska Native students. Finally, students learn to teach academic language and content through STEM. The latter two practices yield community-based outcomes such as UAA student-led professional development opportunities within our graduates' districts, outreach to linguistically and culturally diverse families and communities, and sharing of curricula adaptations for English learners and Alaska Native students, such as district-level science kits.

**Student Success: Student Support** Our students are faculty-advised. There is some administrative support in the form of an assistant who works on behalf of the School of Education, of which the Language Education program is a part. Faculty in the program work closely with the graduate students in the program to help develop their capacity as researchers. Faculty meet individually with the students during and outside office hours and hold Saturday help sessions.

**Student Accomplishments** Our Language Education graduates make important contributions in their districts. Among our alumni are award winners, such as the National Teacher Award, the Denali Teaching Award from the Anchorage School District, and a KTVA Teacher of the Week award winner who was filmed and interviewed about effective teaching practices. One participant was invited to travel out-of-state to participate in an evaluation of an ELL program. A number of our graduates host staff development sessions in their schools and/or districts. Several have become ELL Case Managers. In addition, many of our graduates go on to complete their M.Ed. with a concentration in teaching ELLs. They also serve as mentors for UA preservice teachers.

**4. Program Duplication / Distinctiveness**

There is currently no other stand-alone Graduate Certificate in Language Education leading to an ESL Endorsement. UAF has a Master’s in Second Language Acquisition, Bilingual Education, and Literacy, which includes an ESL endorsement, but the endorsement is tied to a master’s degree. However, many of our students do not seek a master’s degree. For those students who want to complete an M.Ed., there is the option to do an additional 12 credits for the UAA M.Ed. degree in Teaching and Learning. We have been in conversation with UAF and UAS faculty to discuss the possibility of course-sharing and streamlining. We feel that some exciting options could emerge from a 3-way collaboration.

**5. Summary Analysis**

Issues related to language are critical to understanding the nature of education in Alaska today. With over 17,000 English learners and over 100 different language groups in the State, and the threat of extinction of Alaska Native languages throughout the state, it is paramount that UAA provide a program to train general education teachers in meeting the academic and linguistic needs of our diverse population. Data show that even in non-grant funded years, the Language Education program is efficient and fulfills an important state need.

Strengths	The scholarly practitioner model; research-based practice that is immediately useful in the classroom; culturally sustaining and revitalizing pedagogical frame; STEM-focus; 18-credit endorsement meets needs of practicing professionals
Areas of Concern	We need to expand to preK-12 and engage in statewide recruitment efforts
Opportunities	High-needs area that allows for additional grant funding; collaboration with UAF and UAS
Challenges	In-service teachers lack funding for graduate studies—we need to find tuition support for participants

Action Plan	Resources	Timeline
Expand program to include preK-12 endorsement on Alaska Teaching License (currently preK-6)	UAA Faculty	Spring 2021
Statewide Recruitment	UAA Faculty	Ongoing
Procure grant funding for tuition support of students	UAA Faculty	Currently exploring new grant opportunities. New DOE grant call expected Fall 2020.
Seek district-based funding support for in-service teachers	UAA Faculty	Ongoing
Procure TESOL SPA National Recognition; Successful CAEP Review	UAA Faculty	In process. TESOL application Spring 2020; CAEP review Spring 2021

The program review process and the CAEP Accreditation process are not aligned. If, as a result of the current program review process, the Language Education program is recommended for discontinuation, the program will lose its national accreditation and be unable to recommend program completers for licensure. The only option for students at that point would be to immediately transfer to UAS or UAF. Such transfers would be unexpected by students and an abrupt disruption to their established pathways for program completion. The



CAEP cite visit for UAA's Advance Teacher Preparation Programs occurs in the spring of 2021. Following that semester and with CAEP accreditation secured, UAA, in keeping with its commitment to students, would then be positioned to provide a UAA teach-out (not a teach-out by transfer) to any program that was recommended for discontinuation. The disconnect between the spring 2020 expedited review cycle and the spring 2021 accreditation cycle should be recognized and adjusted in order to avoid possible negative consequences for our students.

### **Feedback from Graduate Certificate in Language Education (GCLE) Graduates**

Below are quotes from surveys of our GCLE graduates that highlight the need for our program to continue:

"The GCLE program not only changed who I am as a teacher, but who I am as a person. I have made connections with people I normally would not have met or develop any relationship with. I feel honored to be part of the program and wish all teachers had this wonderful opportunity."

"I have a much better understanding how to support ELL students. I also learned how to make science/STEAM more fun and accessible for students. I feel like I'm also more sympathetic and sensitive to people's cultures and struggles in families who come from other parts of the worlds."

"In my experience, many teachers in Alaska come from the lower 48 and begin teaching with little understanding of the culture. The GCLE Program does an exemplary job teaching educators how to reach ELL's (English Language Learners) in a way that is meaningful and integrated into the curriculum already being used."

"I have become a more reflective teacher. I now journal each day and review what happened to drive my instruction for the next day. I now use the data collected through assessments to better drive my instruction and create a more meaningful experience for my students. I have also used this skill to create meaningful interventions for students who are struggling or students who are more advanced."

"My studies through my action research project of fostering resiliency in English Language Learners, and students who have experienced trauma, through the GCLE program and my following graduate studies have led me directly to my current role as a behavior specialist. I use this knowledge and these commitments of practice every day as I help build culturally sustaining and trauma informed systems in my school to support my ELL students and all students. Our look into education policy began my thinking about systems and how they support students and began my journey into learning about how to consider social justice issues as they affect my students."

"The GCLE Program is an incredible program that allowed me to delve deeper into my passions about the students that I work with, the challenges they face, the systems we put into place to support them, and the ways that society impacts them. This type of learning is crucial for helping educators understand how to support their ELL students and ALL students in their classrooms and schools."

"I hold high expectations for achievement from all of my students. The GCLE program allowed me to cultivate and extend lessons to better reach ELL students by teaching specific techniques such as scaffolding, visual aids, group work, pre and post teaching, sentence frames and how to provide extra opportunities for ELL students to practice, recycle and extend their word knowledge and oral language skills. The Program also encouraged awareness of cultural diversity and use of that awareness in every lesson developed."

"The GCLE program strengthened my role as an advocate for my ELs that they be supported and taught intentionally in ALL four language domains. It began my journey of appreciating speaking and listening, not only as the first steps on the road toward reading and writing, but for their own respective roles in a student's social, academic, and emotional development."

"I feel like I have grown so much both in understanding and practice with teaching ELLs, but also in becoming an educator of teachers as well. I have grown my picture book and trade book library by leaps and bounds to incorporate literacy both reading and writing in my health classes. I have been using journals with my students so they get a chance to write, just write for pleasure and for expressing themselves with no pressure of editing or publishing or being "corrected", just to write what is on their heart and mind and that has been great. I have grown as a professional because I never imagined I would be teaching teachers and I'm about to start my 10th credit course for teachers!"

"There are many languages represented in Anchorage schools, and there is a need for more educators who can effectively teach the content to students whose first language is not English. Test scores are below the national average in most Alaskan schools. Most Alaska Native languages are 'endangered'. The Graduate Certificate in Language Education may also help promote knowledge of the importance of this issue and how educators can help support Native language revitalization while teaching English."

"Through research conducted for GCLE classes, I gained a lot of useful and relevant information that has informed my teaching. My knowledge of and interest in the rural Alaska school experience has grown because of the GCLE program and has encouraged me to advocate and support students coming from rural Alaska K-12 schools."

"The GCLE program is SO important for our schools today where so many kids are ELL. Teachers often go into the classroom without the proper training on how to best teach ELL students (I know I did) and I left the GCLE program with so many more strategies and tools that have made me a better teacher."