

Date: February 2, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: Denise Runge, Dean

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

**Program/s in this review:** Occupational Safety & Health (AAS, BS)

**Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable):**

**Campuses where the program is delivered:** Anchorage, PWSC via eLearning

**Members of the program review committee:**

- Joel Condon, Director
- Albert Grant, Associate Professor
- Chris Boswell, Instructor (adjunct), Prince William Sound College

**Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role** The Occupational Safety & Health programs are well-aligned with the mission of UAA and CTC. The program meets a clear workforce need, preparing safety professionals for several industries inside and outside of Alaska. It complements, but also fills an important gap between related UAA degree programs in Engineering, Construction Management, and Process Technology. The program's graduates are employed across diverse industries including resource extraction, construction, government, and healthcare at attractive salaries; most remain in Alaska and continue to build their careers here.

**Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity** Demand for the program has declined, but at a rate lower than the overall decline in UAA enrollment, while both efficiency and productivity have risen. As noted by the faculty in their review, the OSH program has experienced a modest decline in number of majors, from 87 in 2013 to 78 in 2019, about a ten percent drop. During the same period, the number of graduates has remained stable, presumably due to the addition of the BS degree. Given the primary industries that hire OSH graduates in Alaska, including resource extraction, production and construction, the modest decline during the recent period of economic recession is not surprising. With careful scheduling, a reduction of one full time faculty position, and excellent support for student progress, the program has managed to improve its efficiency and productivity while dealing with a modest enrollment decrease. The program currently covers its instructional costs, with \$222.9 tuition dollars per SCH at a cost of only \$203.5 for a ratio of 1.09. Overall during the review period, the program has seen a slight decline in enrollment, and some excess or unused capacity, but with relatively low costs.

**Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success** Quality appears to be high. From the outset, program faculty created the new BS degree with an eye toward the standards of accreditation required by ABET. While resource constraints prevent us from beginning the process to seek accreditation at this time, the program continues to be structured, and the faculty chosen based upon, the ABET standards. Advisory board members continue to provide strong positive feedback for the program, and provide opportunities for students and graduates in the form of internships, contacts within related professional organizations, and notices of job openings. Many efforts within the program remain focused on student success. Industry representatives helped convince the university to add a BS option to the existing AAS degree, and in 2019 the first graduates completed the new program. Fully online courses, offered collaboratively with Prince William Sound College, afford working students maximum flexibility. A Student Success Advisor and the full time faculty member provide intrusive advising and mentoring for enrolled students.

**Program Duplication / Distinctiveness** UAA offers the only AAS and the only BS in Occupational Safety & Health within Alaska. Both the AAS and the BS can be completed 100% online. The program cooperates with faculty at PWSC, whose online lower division sections comprise approximately thirty percent of the total course offerings.

**Commendations and Recommendations** Commendations: The program is commended for its previous efforts to develop and deliver its courses online in order to accommodate working students' schedules. Further, program faculty are commended for their collaborative course-sharing arrangement between Anchorage and Valdez campuses. Recommendation: The program should continue to explore accreditation options and gather data in anticipation of a future application for accreditation.

**Decision** *Continuation:* Program is successfully serving its students and meeting its mission and goals. No immediate changes necessary, other than regular, ongoing program improvements.