



Date: February 21, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: Jeff Jessee, Dean of the College of Health and Vice Provost of Health Programs

Cc: Benjamin Rush, Committee Chair & Assistant Professor of Outdoor Leadership
T.J. Miller, Director, Department of Health, Physical Education & Recreation
Daniel O'Connor, Director, Prince William Sound College

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

Program/s in this review: Outdoor Leadership AAS

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): N/A

Campuses where the program is delivered: Prince William Sound College

Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role:

The Outdoor Leadership AAS is a two-year degree program focused on teaching the skills needed to work in the dynamic tourism, outdoor education, recreation, and adventure film fields. With new leadership in 2019, the program is expected to refocus on outdoor education and leadership. The program is delivered only through Prince William Sound College, in the heart of unsurpassed opportunities for outdoor recreation. There is a strong link between outdoor recreation and human health and wellness. As a result, this program makes an important contribution to the College of Health mission to improve the health and wellbeing of people and communities.

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

Unfortunately, program demand has historically been low. During this review period, only seven students have graduated from the program. The number of majors has also remained low, but did increase up to 11 in fall 2019 (up from an average of 7.8 per year, from FY13 to FY19). The new leadership is aware of these issues and is exploring how to best improve program demand, efficiency, and productivity. Progress is already happening. The program has strong support from community and industry partners.

Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success:

The Outdoor Leadership AAS has a strong foundation in high impact teaching practices. Experiential learning and community engagement are incorporated throughout the curriculum. Students participate in internships that can lead to employment opportunities. The new leadership is commended for developing a strong focus on academic assessment and student success. Key initiatives have been identified to improve program quality and student success. These initiatives are likely to also improve program demand, efficiency, and productivity.

Program Duplication / Distinctiveness:

There are no other comparable programs in the University of Alaska system. Educational opportunities in outdoor studies are available from other private universities and organizations.

Commendations and Recommendations:

The program makes an important contribution to improving the health and wellness of people and communities. Until now, student interest in the Outdoor Leadership AAS has been rather low. New leadership was appointed in 2019. The program now has an opportunity to be rejuvenated with a stronger focus on outdoor education and leadership. The program conducted a comprehensive academic assessment and began to implement key recommendations for program improvement. Overall, the program is headed in the right direction.

Decision:

Continuation.