



Date: February 2, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: Denise Runge, Dean

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

Program/s in this review: Professional Piloting (AAS)

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): none, but programs fall under certification requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Campuses where the program is delivered: Anchorage

Members of the program review committee:

- Paul Herrick, Director
- Ray Weber, Associate Professor
- Brian Keller, Assistant Professor

Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role The Professional Piloting program is very well-aligned with the mission of UAA and of the CTC. The program meets a clear workforce need in an industry designated by the Department of Labor as “High Demand,” preparing individuals who obtain immediate employment with air carriers or in related piloting positions. It enjoys strong external partnership support, serving the needs of industry and of its enrolled students.

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

Demand for the program has grown during the review period despite general enrollment declines at UAA, and the program has taken steps to become increasingly efficient. The programs had an average of 56 majors per year, with 64 during the 2019 review year. While by its nature pilot education is expensive, the program’s costs are in line with those of other pilot training programs, both within Alaska and in the lower 48. For 2019, the student credit hours per full time equivalent faculty member, or SCH/FTEF was 465.9. Its tuition revenue per credit hour is \$219.4 and its cost per credit hour is \$211.0 for a ratio of 1.04, indicating the program is covering its direct instructional costs. Other costs, including the indirect costs of providing in-house flight training, are high and recent analysis indicates they may not be fully covered by student flight fees. The program continues to examine these costs and seek alternatives. Overall the program is experiencing constrained capacity while keeping its direct instructional costs relatively low.

Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success The quality of the program is evidenced by its FAA certification, and by industry support, including high degree of job

placement for its graduates. The program and its curriculum must meet the strict standards of the FAA and must regularly update to remain in compliance. The program has only graduated an average of 3 students per year, and as faculty explain in their review, non-completion is exacerbated by the option to move seamlessly into the Bachelor of Science in Aviation Technology (BSAT) (good for the student, but give the appearance of a “failure” from a graduation rate standpoint for the AAS program) and by the ability to be hired into various aviation positions prior to completion of an AAS degree.

Following a recent regular program review, the faculty revised the curriculum to better align it to the BSAT degree. As the review committee notes, several major challenges remain that are partially beyond the program’s control, especially an insufficient number of available Certified Flight Instructors, and flight training costs leading to delayed enrollment, as students often stop-out to work in order to earn money for their flight training.

Program Duplication / Distinctiveness Duplication: UAF offers a pilot training program, as do a number of private piloting schools in the state. Distinctiveness: The UAA program is the only post-secondary program in Alaska that operates under FAA regulations (part 141) with an R-ATP authorization, which allows our graduates to gain their Airline Transport Pilot certificate with only 1,250 flight hours, saving them substantial time and money in potential flight costs. Further, as the only part 141 post-secondary institution, our in-house flight program affords our students and graduates the opportunity to serve as Certified Flight Instructors (CFI) with UAA students, earning flight hours toward their R-ATP along with their wages. This creates a substantial win-win, filling a need for current students, for UAA, and for the graduate CFI.

Commendations and Recommendations Commendations: The program is commended for its outreach and partnership efforts in recent years, including its work with the Alaska Air Carriers, school districts, and others on alternative pathways such as concurrent enrollment opportunities and internships. Recommendations: The program should continue to evaluate all available options to increase degree completion rates for its students. The program should work closely with its Student Success Advisor, industry partners, advancement/development staff, and financial aid staff to support a variety of options to assist students in completing their flight training in a timely fashion. The program should continue to explore alternative modes of delivering its programs in order to further enhance productivity and efficiency.

Decision *Continued Review:* Program is required to address specific issues and to undergo another review within the next two academic years.