



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: Mary Dallas Allen, Committee Chair & Associate Professor of Social Work  
Tracey Burke, Professor of Social Work  
Vanessa Meade, Assistant Professor of Social Work

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

**Program/s in this review:** Social Work MSW

**Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable):** The Social Work MSW is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

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

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

The mission of the UAA Master of Social Work (MSW) program is to prepare advanced generalist social workers who address health and social issues in Alaska. As the only MSW program in the state of Alaska, it has an extraordinary impact on the health and wellbeing of people and communities in Alaska. The MSW degree prepares students to pursue licensure in Alaska as a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) or Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). The market demand for social workers is strong. We expect a 26% increase in the need for social workers in Alaska by 2026.

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

The program was recently redesigned into a single, distance delivered MSW program. This redesign was accomplished in 2016. Goals of the redesign included increasing program enrollment, improving efficiency, increasing student diversity, and better serving rural students. From 2016 to 2019, the number of MSW majors increased by 27%, while the number of majors in masters programs at UAA declined by 9%. During this time period, the number of MSW degrees more than doubled, while the number masters degrees at UAA declined by 13%. Since 2018, full tuition revenue now exceeds instructional costs. In 2019, every dollar invested in instruction resulted in \$1.19 in full tuition revenue. In addition, program faculty generate significant revenue from external research grants and contracts (over \$750,000 in the past three years). Program graduates are diverse, and come from communities throughout Alaska.

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

The program has demonstrated an exemplary commitment to program quality, improvement and student success. The program regularly performs a detailed assessment of its student learning outcomes

and makes continual improvements to its curriculum. In response to student needs and concerns, the program transitioned to a single distance-delivered MSW program in 2016. Faculty followed best practices in program design and innovation to improve efficiency, flexibility, and accessibility. At the same time, the program successfully maintained its specialized accreditation through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

**Program Duplication / Distinctiveness:**

There are no other MSW programs in the state of Alaska. Recently, UAF has expressed interest in developing a MSW program for students that graduate from its BSW program.

**Commendations and Recommendations:**

The Social Work MSW fulfills a critical need for social workers in Alaska. It successfully prepares advanced generalist social workers who address critical health and social issues in Alaska. Its mission is central in our efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of people and communities. The program has continuously demonstrated a strong commitment to program quality, improvement and student success. The program could be enhanced to meet the growing need for social workers in Alaska. Areas for enhancement would likely include faculty and student success initiatives. Opening another section of the generalist courses could generate over \$300,000 in tuition revenue. This expected revenue would be sufficient to cover the required additional investments in faculty and staff. This additional section of generalist courses would make a significant contribution to the state needs for social workers and the Board of Regents' goal to double the number of health graduates. In planning for this enhancement, the College of Health would request that the UAA MSW program work with its partners at other MAUs and community campuses to create a consolidated plan for social work education in Alaska.

**Decision:**

Enhancement.