

**2021 ANNUAL ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM
(Due October 15 to the dean)**

The Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee (AAC) is committed to a vision of assessment that leads to continuous program improvements and benefits students. Annual assessment reporting informs decision making and resource allocation aimed at improving student learning and success. It also enables the AAC to analyze assessment across the institution and to respond to UA System, Board of Regents, legislative, and Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) requests. We thank you for your continued support of and participation in this annual activity.

Starting in Spring 2021, UAA is moving to one academic assessment reporting mechanism. The below form merges and streamlines the former Annual Academic Assessment Survey and the Annual Academic Assessment Report. It also incorporates questions about how academic programs contribute to student achievement of institutional core competencies and to student success.

This annual report will be due to the dean on October 15. Programs with suspended admissions and new programs in the first year of implementation are not required to complete this form.

These reports are public documents and will be posted on the assessment website. Responses are to be narrative only, and must be ADA and FERPA compliant. Do not embed any links, including to webpages or other documents. To be FERPA compliant, do not include the names of any current or former students. Rather, use statements such as, "In AY21 four program graduates were accepted to graduate programs in the field." Programs with specialized accreditation or other external recognitions must comply with restrictions regarding what can be published, as per the accreditor or external organization. Do not include appendices. Appendices to this form will not be accepted.

The form uses narrative, text, and drop-down boxes. Narrative boxes have a character limit, which includes spaces. When using text and drop-down boxes, if you want to undo an answer, press "Control-Z" or "Command-Z."

For technical assistance with this form, email Academic Affairs (uaa.oaa@alaska.edu).

PROGRAM SECTION (Due to the dean on October 15)

After completing the Program Section, the program should email this form to the dean, with a copy to the appropriate community campus director(s) if the program is delivered on a community campus.

Submission date: 10/15/2021

Submitted by: Lance Howe, Professor and Chair, Department of Economics, elhowe@alaska.edu

Program(s) covered in this report: Economics BA

(Programs with suspended admissions and new programs in the first year of implementation are not required to complete this form.)

If you selected "Other" above, please identify. *(100 characters or less)*

College: College of Business and Public Policy

Campuses where the program(s) is delivered: Anchorage KOD KPC MSC PWSC

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business - International

If explanation is necessary, such as only some of the certificates and degrees are covered by the specialized accreditation, briefly describe:

INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING CORE COMPETENCIES

In 2020, UAA launched a consensus-based, deliberative process to identify the key skillsets that help students achieve academic and post-graduation success. After a year-long process that included students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and employers, the UAA community identified four "core competencies" at the heart of a quality UAA education. Students develop mastery of these competencies through curricular (e.g., courses), co-curricular (e.g., internships, conferences), and extra-curricular (e.g., student clubs) learning experiences.

After the stakeholder-based process in AY20, UAA conducted a pilot project focusing on the core competency of Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility (PPCR). This decision was based on input from the 2020 Annual Academic Assessment Retreat.

Question #1 below is designed to engage program faculty in thinking about how they can or already do promote student learning in this core competency.

1. Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility: The knowledge and skills necessary to promote personal flourishing, professional excellence, and community engagement.

- **What would you hope a student would say if asked where in your program or support service they had the opportunity to develop proficiency in this Core Competency? (500 characters or less)**

Students could point to Econ 492 (the capstone course), Econ 490 (the economic internship), and to research opportunities afforded in different classes (e.g. Econ 312,



Econ 337, etc.). Also some students work in the Vernon Smith Experimental Science Laboratory and for individual faculty; those students could highlight unique learning opportunities. Some students work on grant funded research projects that involve collecting data in the field and involve engaged learning activities.

- **Do you have an example that could be a model for the university of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that showcases the student learning in this core competency?** Yes No

If yes, please briefly describe. (500 characters or less)

- **Do you have any ideas about where your program or the university might develop other intentionally designed opportunities for students to develop proficiency in this core competency?** Yes No

If yes, please briefly describe. (500 characters or less)

With COVID, faculty student research initiatives have been hampered. Informal interaction/conversation between faculty and students leads to engaged learning activities but these interactions haven't happened much during COVID.

Also, hybrid (in-person and live online) courses are likely to become more common.

Greater investment by UAA in faculty support for engaged student learning in our new environment is very important. This includes classroom tech & lecture capture support.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Please list the Program Student Learning Outcomes your program assessed in AY21. For each outcome, indicate one of the following: Exceeded faculty expectations, Met faculty expectations, or Did not meet faculty expectations.**

Example: Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats – Exceeded faculty expectations.

Goal 2. Understand economic concepts and analytical skills and apply them to economic problems.

56% of students met expectations

Goal 4. Understand the role of institutions, especially markets and government, in shaping economic outcomes. 100% of students met expectations

- Describe your assessment process in AY21 for these program student learning outcomes, including the collection of data, analysis of data, and faculty (and other, e.g., advisory board) conversations around the findings. (750 characters or less)**

Goal 2: Free-response exam sub-section from Econ 312 (Econometrics).

Goal 4. Knowledge was assessed using 10 multiple choice questions on a standardized exam from Economic Development (Econ 337). On average, students scored just over 71% on the 10 questions and we judged 100% of students to pass core competency on economic institution related

questions.

4. What are the findings and what do they tell the faculty about student learning in your program? (750 characters or less)

Goal #2 was assessed using a high standard in a challenging analytical course that is typically taught in person; because of COVID it was online. We assessed an exam question that involved coding and problem solving. Answers were assessed based on accuracy of coding, interpretation of results, and deriving data-driven conclusions. Student learning in this course was particularly affected by remote learning due to COVID. Outcomes tell us that students struggled with learning challenging statistical concepts in a pure online format.

Goal #3 was assessed based on knowledge comprehension questions from course readings on institutions. Concepts and related questions were more concept based and reflect strong student success.

5. Based on the findings, did the faculty make any recommendations for changes to improve student achievement of the program student learning outcomes? Please describe the recommended action, what improvement in student learning the program hopes to see with this change, the proposed timeline, and how the program will know if the change has worked. If no recommendations for changes were made, please explain that decision. (750 Characters or less)

We will collect Goal #2 data again in 2021-22 for Econometrics (Econ 312) to test how student learning improved once this course returned to a standard in-person format. Starting in mid-October, the Economics department also made a TA available for Econometrics students to meet with virtually or in person.

As for Goal #3, we will assess institutions again in the future on a normal rotation. We will continue to cover concepts related to the role of Economic Institutions in Economic Development, Economics Principles and in other Economics courses.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS AND ASSESSING IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING

6. In the past academic year, how did your program use the results of previous assessment cycles to make changes intended to improve student achievement of the program student learning outcomes? Please check all that apply.

- Course curriculum changes
- Course prerequisite changes
- Changes in teaching methods
- Changes in advising
- Degree requirement changes
- Degree course sequencing
- Course enrollment changes (e.g., course capacity, grading structure [pass/fail, A-F])

- Changes in program policies/procedures
- Changes to Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)
- College-wide initiatives (e.g., High Impact Practices)
- Faculty, staff, student development
- Other
- No changes were implemented in AY21.

If you checked "Other" above, please describe. (100 characters or less)

7. Do you have any information about how well these or other past improvements are working? Are they achieving their intended goals? Please include any data or assessment results that help you demonstrate this. (750 characters or less)

Working with UAF we aligned Economics Principles courses and other lower division Economics courses. This involved renumbering Economic Principles from 200 to 100 level. In Fall 2021 this change was finally reflected on student schedules. In addition to alignment, we wanted to see more Freshman in Principles and we wanted to see more students taking Principles of Microeconomics. Based just on data from Fall 2021 this seems to be the case. In Fall 2020, Principles of Micro students made up 38% of total Principles of Econ enrollment whereas in Fall 2021 they made up 68% of total Principles enrollment.

STUDENT SUCCESS AND THE CLOSING OF EQUITY GAPS

Programs are not required to respond to question #8 below for their report due on October 15, 2021. Question #8 will be required for the next round and moving forward.

8. Respond to at least one of the following metrics. Student success depends on many aspects of a student's experience. On the academic program level, it can relate to correct placement, course sequencing, standardized pre-requisites, the intentional use of high impact practices, proactive advising, course scheduling practices, etc. UAA is using the following two metrics in its cyclical Program Review process, as well as in its reaffirmation of accreditation process. These data are included in the most recent IR-Reports Program Review dashboard. Please review these data for your program, note any equity gaps, and describe steps you are taking or plan to take to close those gaps.

Metric	Definition	Rationale
JUNIOR GRADUATION RATE - BACCALAUREATE	The percentage of students who graduate with a bachelor's degree within four years of first reaching junior class status (60 credits). <i>Data source: RPTP end-of-term</i>	Junior graduation rate (after 60 credits) can reflect a department's success in helping students complete their degrees. Within their first 60 credits, students typically focus on completing GERS and often

Metric	Definition	Rationale
	<i>freeze files. Disaggregate as per accreditation.</i>	switch majors. Tracking how long it takes students to complete their degrees after 60 credits, when many students have likely committed to a specific major, can provide actionable information for departments.
COURSE PASS RATES BY COURSE LEVEL (Undergraduate lower-division, undergraduate upper-division, and graduate).	The percentage of students who receive a passing grade (A, B, C, P) for all undergraduate students and (A, B, P) for graduate students in a course offered by a program compared to the same rate calculated for all courses at that level. Based on a 5-year trend. Included in the denominator for undergraduate courses are the grades D, F, W, I, NP, NB. Included in the denominator for graduate level are the grades C, D, F, W, I, NP, NB. Discipline acts as a proxy for a program. <i>Data source: RPTP end-of-term freeze files. Disaggregate as per accreditation.</i>	Low pass rates are one critical way to identify courses that are barriers to student success and degree completion. Failing key courses correlates with low retention and more major switching. Mitigation strategies can be internal or external to the course itself, including, among other things, the use of high-impact pedagogical practices, appropriate placement, course sequencing, tutoring, and other means to ensure student success within a particular course. This metric and the disaggregation of the data can inform planning, decision making, and the allocation of resources to programs and services designed to mitigate gaps in achievement and equity.

9. Do you have any examples of post-graduate success you want to highlight? For example, major scholarships, the percent of students who pass licensure examinations, the percent of students accepted to graduate programs, the percent in post-graduation employment in the field or a related field. (750 characters or less)

This past year economics undergraduate majors were accepted into Harvard Law, University of Chicago Law, University of Wyoming (Economics), Purdue (Economics), and other programs. Based on NSC postaward data for UAA, since 2015, we have had 107 students enroll in a US graduate program. We have also had students accepted into programs outside the United States, for instance at Oxford and Cambridge.

DEAN SECTION (Due to the program on January 15)

After completing the Dean Section and signing it, the dean should email this form to the program, and copy uaa_oaa@alaska.edu for posting. If the program is delivered on one or more community campus, the dean should consult with the appropriate community campus director(s) on the response and copy the appropriate community campus director(s) when emailing the response to the program.

1. Based on the program's responses above, what guidance and support do you have for the program moving forward? Is there a particular area the program should focus on? (750 characters or less)

The students are meeting program goals which is set at 70%. Faculty suggest raising the goal to 75%. Consider increasing the goal incrementally beyond 75% in the coming years. The Assurance of Learning (AoL) committee has improved the assessment process and has designated staff support to assist. The AoL committee has scheduled a meeting with faculty to share best practices. I suggest the AoL committee continue to refine the assessment process and keep faculty highly involved to maintain awareness. Going forward, faculty should consider ways to better determine post-grad success. I suggest faculty start documenting examples of core competency-communication for the 2022 assessment.

2. Is there something the program is doing particularly well in terms of its processes for the assessment and improvement of student learning, including the closing of equity gaps, that might serve as a model for other programs? If yes, please explain. You may skip this question. (750 characters or less)

The assessment process has evolved to include even more faculty input. The current chairs of the AoL committee have helped to establish a more structured process that has been documented and shared with faculty. This has increased awareness about assessment and thus, improved student learning. Econ students have opportunities to conduct research in Econ A312, Econ A337, and Econ 492. Internships are also available. In addition, students conduct experiments in the Vernon Smith Experimental Science Lab. A mentoring program opportunity for CBPP and Econ students is the Tom Case Leadership Fellows program.

Dean's signature:



Date: 11/4/2021