2022 ANNUAL ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM
(Due October 15 to the dean)

PROGRAM SECTION (Due to the dean on October 15)

Submission date: 10/21/2022

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Program(s) covered in this report: Conservation Ecology OEC

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

College: College of Arts and Sciences

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

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): N/A
   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 is phasing in the integration of the core competencies into ongoing processes, including program student learning outcomes assessment. Personal, Professional, and Community Responsibility (PPCR) was integrated into the AY21 Annual Academic Assessment Report. The AY22 Annual Academic Assessment Report now also integrates Effective Communication.

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

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

- **If last year you provided your program's current or planned example of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that develops and showcases the student learning in this core competency, please discuss that implementation and any observations you have regarding how well it is working. *(500 characters or less)***
We did not have a report last year as this was the first academic year of this OEC.

- **If last year you *did not* identify a current or planned example of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that provides students the opportunity to develop and showcase this core competency, please identify one now. *(500 characters or less)***
The entire program was built to develop this core competency. From the text of the assessment plan, "Through internships and seminars, students will work with government and non-profit professionals doing real-time data collection in environmental conservation. This unique program will allow students to glimpse what might lie beyond their college education and will undoubtedly help connect theory to practice."

   B. *Effective Communication: The knowledge and skills necessary to engage in effective communication in diverse contexts and formats.*

- **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 will say that they developed proficiency in this core competency in BIOL A483, A495A, and BIOL A492A at a minimum but would probably also point to the EL in Conservation Ecology (BIOL A484).

- **Provide your program's current or planned example(s) of an intentionally designed course, assignment, or activity that showcases the student learning in this core competency. *(500 characters or less)***
Students give oral presentations in a minimum of three of the courses in the program. These courses are BIOL A484, A495A, BIOL A492A.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

2. **Please list the Program Student Learning Outcomes your program assessed in AY22. 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.
   1. Describe and apply basic tenants of conservation ecology and climate change - Met faculty expectations.

2. Design and implement a research project to examine applied ecology in the field, as well as contribute to long-term ecological projects - Exceeded faculty expectations.

3. Critique current issues associated with ecological conservation in Alaska - Exceeded faculty expectations.

4. Analyze and demonstrate common field and lab skills used by conservation ecologists - Met faculty expectations.

3. **Describe your assessment process in AY22 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)*

   To assess PSLO 1 & 3, the program director provided entrance statements from each student, program staff conducted metacognitive End of Program Reflections, and program faculty collected artifacts from BIOL A484 and grade data from BIOL A473. The grade data and artifacts were reviewed and discussed by program faculty as a group. The entrance statements and end of program reflections were reviewed by Biological Sciences Assessment faculty.

   For PSLO 2 & 4, presentations were collected from a few different courses including BIOL A484, A495A, BIOL A492A. These artifacts were were reviewed and discussed by program faculty as a group.

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

   All students in the Spring 2022 Semester By the Bay program took BIOL A446. Of the 12 students in the program, 8 students completed the courses required for the OEC and 4 were awarded the OEC. From reviewing the artifacts and presentations it is evident that students are achieving the PSLOs. The pass rates for BIOL A473 is 100% with a class GPA of 3.85. The findings indicate to the faculty that students who come to Homer to enroll in the Semester by the Bay program and enroll in the Conservation Ecology Occupational Endorsement Certificate are well prepared and perform well.

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)*

   As this is the first year reporting and using the assessment plan, we noticed some areas for improvement of the assessment process. First, program faculty are considering creating specific program level rubrics rather than course specific rubrics to assess the PSLOs. The improvement in student learning outcomes is more about alignment of objectives to assessment. These rubrics will be developed over the next two years first for PSLO 1 and 3 and then for PSLO 2 and 4. Second, when writing the report the program faculty felt that it would be better to focus on two of the learning objectives every other year. So in odd years, assess PSLOs 1 and 3 and in even years assess PSLOs 2 and 4.

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 AY22.

   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)***
   This is the first year of using the assessment plan for this OEC. We hope that the changes that we noted in 5 will improve alignment between PSLOs and the assessment process.

8. **PROGRAMS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO RESPOND TO QUESTION #8 FOR THEIR REPORT DUE ON OCTOBER 15, 2022. IT IS HERE JUST FOR THEIR REFERENCE.**

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)***
   Program staff conduct a follow-up survey of graduates from the program. Some of students from the Spring 2022 Semester by the Bay program returned to their home campus and are completing their bachelor's degrees. One student from the program participated as a scholar at the UN Sustainable Development Academy in Pottsdam, Germany. Another has secured work in a related

field with a climate lobbying group. Several have applied to or been accepted to graduate or veterinary programs (UAA, UCSC, U of Oregon).

DEAN SECTION (Due to the program on January 15)

1. **Based on the program's responses above, what guidance and support do you have for the program moving forward?** *(750 characters or less)*
   The program is encouraged to promote this OEC and to provide these opportunities to students in the UAA system.

2. **What is the program doing particularly well in terms of its processes for the assessment and improvement of student learning, for example, the achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes, the closing of equity gaps, or addressing the core competencies?** *(750 characters or less)*
   The program has done a good job of designing and implementing a new assessment plan. As evidenced in the response to question 1, the program appears to be set up so as to offer excellent opportunities for discipline specific community engagement.

Jenny McNulty

Dean's signature: _____ **Date:** 1/9/2023