REPORT ON AY2022-2023 ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

Submission date: 11/15/2023

Assessment Plan covered in the report: Human Services AAS/BHS

College: College of Health

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

Submitted by: Dr. Yvonne Chase, Chair, Department of Human Services, ymchase@alaska.edu

After responding to the questions below, 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.

1. **Please list and number the Program Student Learning Outcomes your program assessed in AY23. For each outcome, indicate one of the following: Exceeded faculty expectations, Met faculty expectations, or Did not meet faculty expectations.**

   Example: 1. Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats – Exceeded faculty expectations; 2. Adopt critical perspectives for understanding the forces of globalization and diversity – Met faculty expectations.

   PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES – BHS Degree Program

   • Demonstrate skills in assessing needs and providing direct and indirect services to individuals, families, groups, and communities, families and groups: EXCEEDED FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

   • Apply the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) Standards for Ethical Behavior to their professional work: MET FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

   • Demonstrate skills in research design, data collection, analysis, and evaluation. Analysis: MET FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

   • Demonstrate a high level of self-awareness, knowledge, and skills in the complexities of

   Multiculturalism. - EXCEEDED FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

   • Demonstrate skills to effectively intervene with individuals from diverse populations: MET

   FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

   PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES – AAS Degree Program

• Apply the skills and competencies necessary to assess clients' individual needs: develop and implement a plan of action. EXCEEDED FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

• Demonstrate knowledge of the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) Standards for Ethical Behavior in their professional work. - MET FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

• Demonstrate active listening, counseling skills, dealing effectively with conflict, clarifying expectations, and establishing rapport. - EXCEEDED FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

• Apply knowledge to working in community-based human services organizations. – EXCEEDED FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

2. **Describe your assessment process in AY23 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.** *(1000 words or less)*

AY2023 was an accreditation year for the Department of Human Services. The department reviewed its overall assessment approach and built on AY2022 methods by adding systematic review of electronic portfolios, review of learning outcomes by all faculty, and involvement of the department's statewide advisory council. The latter was highly involved in reviewing not only the assessment plan but assessment findings. Electronic portfolios represent a significant source of assessment data regarding student writing, reflective engagement of experiential learning, and linkage of practicum with other courses. The electronic portfolio contains student-generated content on all learning outcomes in visual, written narrative, video, and photographic portrayal of students' work. Within electronic portfolios, students are able to demonstrate their adherence to key practices involving client needs assessment, ethical engagement, helping skills, and organizational acumen. A faculty member reviewed each student portfolio at biweekly intervals highlighting student improvement areas. The portfolio follows the student across four courses as they build their content progressively. In addition to systematic reviews across three courses, another faculty member assesses student content within the electronic portfolio for the capstone demonstration of attitudes, knowledge, skills and competencies. External accreditors reviewed selected portfolios and faculty demonstrated for them the department's approach to student learning outcome assessment. The Department of Human Services incorporates a systematic approach to quality improvement of student learning involving: (1) accretion of content within the student portfolio, (2) student interpretation of their learning, (3) faculty check of the quality of student work, (4) faculty feedback to students for improvement in their academic work and professional development, and (5) review of procedures and findings by the department's advisory council.

3. **What are the findings and what do they tell the faculty about student learning in your program?** *(1000 words or less)*

Findings indicate that students incorporate the ethics and values of the profession into their work

with clients, peers and agency representatives. The majority of students develop effective communication skills, learn to practice diversity, equity and inclusion, ethical and cultural competence, how to become effective human services practitioners, and how agencies function. They recognize how their own biases affect working with clients, and are learning to build professional relationships with agency representatives. Analysis of portfolios indicate that students advance their competencies in writing, reflective thinking, critical thinking, portrayal of their learning using multimedia methods, and presentations skills. Five observations are relevant here in terms of student learning of core human service practice skills over four index courses involving 295A, 295B, 495, and the capstone course, 496. These observations are:

a.   Students start 295A with limited knowledge and skills in using authentic methods in assessing their own work. They improve greatly over the course in their narrative approach to the portrayal of their work. By the end of the semester, they present highly personalized narratives of their learning gains using multimedia methods.

b.   Students start 295B with considerable insight into how to build their electronic portfolios as a means for portraying their academic and professional learning. By the end of 295B, students demonstrate a capacity to integrate their course work with their experiential learning within practicum. They gain insight into the process of helping, particularly in the assessment of needs, and in the development of person-centered service plans for helping vulnerable recipients of human services. They demonstrate key insights into themselves as helpers and as ethical actors within human service organizations. In addition, they grow in their sophistication in understanding human services organizations.

c.   Students move through 495 with considerable engagement of their electronic portfolios. The technical assistance they seek in improving their portfolios reflect their growing insight into the use of technology to portray their learning through multimedia tools. Students' ease of use of multimedia tools increases in this course. The quality of narrative portrayal of learning improves greatly as well.

d.   Students continue to build their portfolios in 496, which is the capstone course for the BHS degree program. Here student learning involves a deepening of research skills and the skills of inquiry as well as the deepening of their insight into evaluation of practice. Students integrate attitudes, knowledge, skills and competencies within this course as they advance an empirical project relevant to their practicum.

e.   Overall, the 2023 assessment reveals that the electronic portfolio is a sound platform for faculty assessment of student learning as well as the involvement of students in the assessment of their own learning. The electronic portfolio enables the integration of content within the practicum sequence and across other courses in Human Services.

4. **Based on the findings, did the faculty make any recommendations for changes to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes?** Yes

   i. **Please describe the recommended action(s), what improvements in student learning the program hopes to see, the proposed timeline, and how the program will know if the change(s) has worked. If no recommendations for changes were made, please explain that decision.** *(1000 words or less)*

      This is the second year that the Department of Human Services has used and refined the student portfolio as strategy for advancing assessment at three levels: (1) student assessment of their own learning, (2) faculty assessment of student learning, and (3) program assessment of student learning at both the AAS and BHS levels. The coming year, AY 2024-2025 will see an increase in the scope of the department's use of electronic portfolios involving:

      Improvements in assessment system:

      a. Expansion of the student portfolio for the purposes of job search and career development, which will be a new thread of assessment within the electronic portfolio template.

      b. Introduction of electronic portfolios into key first and second semesters of the core year involving HUMS 155, HUMS 107, and HUMS 225. These courses are integral to the practice core of the curriculum.

      c. Training of all students in the technology of electronic portfolios occurring within the first semester.

      Improvements in student learning

      d. Identifying students' core technology skills using a nationally norm referenced training system to insure that they can use basic technologies in their learning.

      e. Equipping students with the technological skills in working with electronic portfolios early in their careers in Human Services education.

      f. Preparing students earlier in reflective narrative writing and in multimedia portrayal of their learning.

      The department will know of the effectiveness of these changes in the skills students demonstrate in using electronic portfolios—opening them, working across the template within HUMS 155, 170, and 225. In addition, students will have electronic portfolios in place at least one semester before the initiation of their use in HUMS 295A.

5. **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 AY23. *(If no options above were selected)*

If you checked "Other" above, please describe. *(100 words or less)*
The Department of Human Services is placing more emphasis on student use of technology in the advancement of their practice. We are in the early stages of this change, but the incorporation of the electronic portfolios in this process has been an important one. The department will be introducing a nationally normed approach to assessing students' understanding of software and its use in human services practice.

6. **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.** *(1000 words or less)*

The probability that students will be hired during the course of their academic preparation both at the AAS and at BHS levels is some 90%. This is creating an interesting shift in the program's strategy of student academic preparation and professional development. This statistic reflects the preparation of students to handle entry level positions in a job market in which their skills are highly relevant to the current provision of human services. This development is requiring us to shift the student learning experience in anticipation of their early hire through six strategies:

a. Strengthening of employment-based practicum so students can fulfill practicum requirements on the job.

b. Students' involvement in OECs as a means to enhance their on the job relevance.

c. Carrying the electronic portfolio into the job setting to demonstrate student acquisition of employment relevant skills.

d. Articulating students' transition from the AAS to the BHS in order to facilitate career

development within the organizations in which students gain employment.

    e.   Better alignment of student learning outcomes with the needs of employers.

    f.   Development of apprenticeships for students in human services careers.

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?** *(200 words or less)*

   The program assessed nine of the 11 program student learning outcomes for the AAS and BHS (the other two were recently added in 2022-23). The program continues to implement a robust assessment process using electronic portfolios. Using data from students, faculty, and the department's advisory council, the program is able to thoroughly assess student progress in both the AAS and BHS. However, much of the program's focus is on the quality of the electronic portfolios (e.g., organization, writing conventions). We encourage the program to use the data from students, faculty, and the department's advisory council to more directly assess the student learning outcomes (e.g., students' ability to demonstrate skills in research design, demonstrate active listening and counseling skills, dealing effectively with conflict).

2. **Discuss what the program is doing particularly well in terms of its processes for the assessment and improvement of student learning, for example, the use of a common rubric or prompt, a signature assignment, etc.** *(200 words or less)*

   The AAS in Human Services and the Bachelor of Human Services were both re-accredited with no conditions by the Council for Standards in Human Service Education. External reviewers praised the faculty for their responsiveness to assessment evaluations and for providing clear learning expectations to students (particularly in the practicum courses). They also praised the faculty for integrating the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) Standards for Ethical Behavior in the curriculum. This is a key program student learning outcome for both the AAS and the BHS. The external reviewers recommended that faculty provide more instruction on life span development, aging and gerontology, group dynamic theory, and evaluation. Several of these recommendations are directly related to the programs' student learning outcomes. The reviewers also emphasized the importance of evaluating the artifacts within the electronic portfolios to more directly assess student learning outcomes.

Dean's signature: <u>Debbie Craig, PhD</u> **Date:** 12/20/2023