

**Associate of Science Program**  
**School of Arts & Science, University of Alaska Southeast**  
**2015-16 Annual Report on Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes**

Sherry Tamone and Jon Martin, Assessment Coordinators

November 2017 <sup>1</sup>

**Introductory Comments:** Former Dean Marsha Sousa suggested that the assessment plan for the GER Program would suffice for the Associates of Science (AS) Program. It is important to note, however, that neither the GER nor the AS Programs have assessment plans. This is presumably because the focus to date has been on preparing assessment plans for programs that have well-defined faculty “homes.” Neither the GER Program, the Associates of Arts (AA), nor the AS Program has ever been assigned well-defined faculty “homes.”

The AS assessment coordinators plan to work in collaboration with Brad Ewing, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Director, and the Associate of Science (AS) Program assessment coordinators to identify meaningful data that can be used to assess the two associate degrees.

For the past year (Fall 2016 – present) the Provost’s Action Committee on General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO Committee) has been working on developing student learning outcomes along with accompanying rubrics for purposes of assessing student learning in the area of general education requirements. The hope of the AS assessment coordinators is that a meaningful student learning assessment plan for the AS Program might be prepared in close collaboration with the Associate of Arts (AA) Program, and along the lines of what the GELO Committee prepares.

This annual report, the first such report for the AS Program, should be considered the first step in arriving at an AS Student Learning Assessment Plan.

**Goals/Objectives:** The UAS Academic catalog describes the Associate of Science degree as follows.

*The Associate of Science degree (A.S.) provides students with a broad academic education. It is designed to be a transfer degree to baccalaureate degree programs, with an emphasis in the sciences.*

This is accomplished by providing students with learning opportunities in the core academic areas of mathematics, natural and social sciences, humanities, fine arts and communication. It is worth observing that this description is almost identical to that of the AA degree.

For the AS Program further advice is provided for students seeking to transfer to a baccalaureate degree program.

*If a student intends to transfer to a bachelor degree program, he/she should consult the requirements for the advanced degree as some special general education and lower division courses are required in bachelor degrees.*

These descriptions provide a strong argument in favor of using the GER assessment plan for a major portion of the AS assessment plan.

<sup>1</sup> This assessment report was developed in coordination with Dr. Chris Hay-Jahans and Dr. Coleen Ianuzzi who wrote the report for the Associates of Arts (AA) degree. We have permission to use the text from the AA report.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** The Office of UAS Institutional Effectiveness (IE) provides some data for annual reports and five-year program reviews. However, much of the data do not provide for a meaningful analysis of the program, or of an assessment of the program's learning outcomes. Other data, on student learning, is not available.

The AS assessment coordinators plan to use the FY18 AS supporting data document that was prepared by Brad Ewing, IE Director, and the AS assessment coordinators to identify meaningful data for the assessment of associates degrees that can be provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. For the present report, only selected summaries of enrollments, student profile, program cost, and completion rates are provided in the next section.

**Key Findings and Measures:** Since the AS Program does not have an assessment plan, any discussion of measures is not meaningful and student learning cannot be assessed at this time.

Data for the 2016 fiscal year shows that 43 students enrolled in the AS program. Of these, 68% identified themselves as female, 32% as male, and 92% as being from Alaska, 18% identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, 47% identify as White, and 37% did not report. Fall-to-Spring persistence rates were 76% (compared to 76% for UA) and 48% (compared to 55% for UA) for Fall-to-Fall retention rates. A total of 3 students graduated in 2015, 3 in 2016, and 7 in 2017 with an AS degree. The average completion profiles for FY13-17 shows that 85% of degree completers were female, 15% were male, and the mean age was 24yo. Program cost is currently being calculated by UAS Institutional Effectiveness in collaboration with Deans and Campus Directors; these data will be included in the future reports.

**Proposed Program Changes/Measures Based on Assessment Results:** At this stage actions, along with proposed timelines, worth mentioning include:

1. The assessment coordinators will prepare a student learning assessment plan for the AS Program by the end of Spring 2018.
2. At least some portion of the assessment plan will be tested during the 2018-2019 academic year.

**Assessment Plan Changes Based on Assessment Results:** Since no assessment plan has existed for the AS Program to date, there is nothing to report with respect to changes to the assessment plan. However, it is hypothesized that: a) students typically declare their intent to earn an AS degree in their last year; and b) some students who declare their intent to earn an AS change their minds and switch to a baccalaureate degree program before graduating with an AS degree. So, it seems worthwhile to obtain IE data on:

- The proportion of students who graduate with an AS in the same academic year that they declare.
- The proportion of students who declare, and who do not graduate with an AS even after completing AS requirements.
- The proportion of students who declare, who do not graduate with an AS even after completing AS requirements, and who continue on to a UA or UAS baccalaureate degree program.
- The proportion of students who graduate with an AS and who continue on to a UA or UAS baccalaureate degree program.