MEMORANDUM
May 5, 2012

To Carol Hedlin, UAS Vice Provost
From Robin Walz, BA Social Science Portfolio Coordinator
Copy Marsha Sousa, Dean of Arts & Sciences
Dan Monteith, Social Science Chair
Re Bachelor of Arts in Social Science End of Year Report – Catalog Years 2010-2011 & 2011-2012

This memo provides continuing assessment of student learning outcomes and the Bachelor of Arts in Social Science (BASS) degree program for the academic years 2010-2011* and 2011-2012. The principal finding is that the BASS program continues to be robust with enrollments of degree-seeking students and numbers of graduates among the strongest in the School of Arts and Sciences (second only to the Bachelor of Liberal Arts, in which Social Science faculty actively participate). Faculty evaluation of BASS graduate portfolios demonstrates that students perform at a high level (above average).

1. Assessment Methods

The Student Assessment Portfolio (SAP) is the principal tool used for the final evaluation of BASS graduates. The following competencies are evaluated:

- University and Social Science Competencies being assessed
  - W = Written Communication
  - O = Oral Communication
  - T = Critical Thinking
  - Q = Quantitative Reasoning
  - C = Computer Usage
  - P = Professional Behavior
  - D = Appreciation of Cultural and Social Diversity

Each assessment area is evaluated on a five-point scale
- 1 = Inadequate Performance (Limited Understanding)
- 2 = Somewhat Acceptable Performance (Some Understanding)
- 3 = Acceptable Performance (Satisfactory)
- 4 = High Performance (Above Average)
- 5 = Excellent Performance (Superior Analysis or Synthesis)

In SSCI 210 First Portfolio Review, all BASS students assemble the SAP, which includes initial Program Evaluation and Cultural Diversity essays. Over the course of their degree program, BASS students are assessed at the level of individual coursework in interdisciplinary Social Science Core (SSCI) courses and in a Primary Concentration and two Secondary Concentrations from the disciplines of Anthropology, Economics, Government, History, Psychology and Sociology. The SAP is completed and evaluated by multiple Social Science faculty members in the BASS student’s graduating semester.

* Due to the sudden departure of two faculty members responsible for annual assessment in 2010-2011, the report was not completed. Information about that year has been incorporated into this report.
2. Assessment Data

Student enrollment in the BASS degree program (Sp. 2012): 87 (source: UAS Institutional Effectiveness)

Enrollments in the Concentration Areas (source: UAS Institutional Effectiveness)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Concentration</th>
<th>Secondary Concentration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology 15</td>
<td>Anthropology 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics 3</td>
<td>Economics 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government/Political Science 10</td>
<td>Government/Political Science 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 10</td>
<td>History 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology 37</td>
<td>Psychology 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology 7</td>
<td>Sociology 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second area of Secondary Concentration is unknown (currently UAS Institutional Effectiveness can only draw one secondary field from Banner). Total numbers in the two concentration areas do not match because entry-level students have not yet determined their secondary areas. Complete information about all concentrations for all BASS students is on file at the Arts & Sciences Student Advising Office.

Final Portfolio Review Summary Data

**AY 2010-2011 - Number of Graduating Students Evaluated: 10**

1. Program Evaluation Essay #2 Competencies Assessed (W, C, P) Average 4.00
2. Social and Cultural Diversity Essay #1 Competencies Assessed (W, C, D) Average 4.00
3. Written Communication
   a) Research Paper(s) Competencies Assessed (W, T, C, P, D) Average 4.10
   b) Analytical Paper(s) Competencies Assessed (W, T, C, Q) Average 4.22
4. Oral Communication
   a) Two Informal Presentations Competencies Assessed (O, T, Q, D) Average 4.30
   b) Formal Presentation Competencies Assessed (O, T, Q, C, P, D) Average 4.10
* One student completed the portfolio in Spring 2011, but did not graduate until Fall 2011.

**AY 2011-2012 - Number of Graduating Students Evaluated: 13**

1. Program Evaluation Essay #2 Competencies Assessed (W, C, P) Average 3.65
2. Social and Cultural Diversity Essay #1 Competencies Assessed (W, C, D) Average 3.69
3. Written Communication
   a) Research Paper(s) Competencies Assessed (W, T, C, P, D) Average 4.09
   b) Analytical Paper(s) Competencies Assessed (W, T, C, Q) Average 3.88
4. Oral Communication
   a) Two Informal Presentations Competencies Assessed (O, T, Q, D) Average 3.83
   b) Formal Presentation Competencies Assessed (O, T, Q, C, P, D) Average 4.29

The principal finding of this data is that graduates in the BASS program display High Performance (above average) across all assessment categories and competencies. The slight drop in averages in AY 2011-2012 is likely only apparent; statistically this may be due to the fact that score ranges actually used by faculty evaluators differed in the two years (i.e., Range 3-5 AY 2010-2011 and Range 1-5 AY 2011-2012). This may also simply be an anomaly between the two graduating groups of BASS students.
3. Faculty Evaluation of BASS Program

The final Student Assessment Portfolios are evaluated by at least two Social Science faculty members annually. In addition to the SAP assessment, the entire Social Science Faculty participate in the oral exit interviews presented by all graduating BASS students that term.

From the written exit surveys completed over the past two years, we know that BASS graduates:

- Plan to seek employment or pursue graduate studies at a 3:1 ratio.
- The identified universities to pursue graduate studies are UAA, UAF, and UAS.
- These students participated in extra-curricular activities at UAS at a 1:2 ratio.
- Nearly 70% of BASS students worked 4 or more (max. 12) semesters during their studies.
- Half of those working students worked over 20 hours per week.
- BASS graduates are highly satisfied with the Soc. Sci faculty (Av. 1-5 Score Range: 4.13-4.50)
- BASS students feel well-prepared by the degree program (Av. 1-5 Score Range: 3.62-4.88)

Distilled from the comments made by the BASS graduates in the written exit survey and oral interviews:

Student-Identified Strengths of the BASS Program
- The expertise of and personal access to Social Science faculty.
- Like the interdisciplinary program; well-prepared through broad academic preparation and understanding of human behavior.
- Opportunities to apply academic knowledge (fieldwork, internships).
- Small class size and challenging courses (particularly at the upper-division level).
- Supplemental Social Science faculty on Ketchikan & Sitka campuses (courses, helpfulness).

Student-Identified Weaknesses of the BASS Program:
- The limited number of upper-division course offerings.
- Difficulties in long-range course planning; i.e., slippages between upper-division offerings, frequency of offerings, the catalog, the six-year plan, and their relationship to the degree.
- Course scheduling (time conflicts, cancelled classes).
- Difficulties with specific professors (especially when there is only one; forced conflict).
- Not enough depth in the primary concentration.

Student-Identified Improvements for the BASS Program:
- Develop a statistics curriculum specific to the social sciences.
- Develop modern and Native language programs.
- At least two Social Science faculty per discipline (diversity & frequency of courses; options).
- More academic and career planning.
- More cross-disciplinary course listings (e.g., Anth/Hist, Gov’t/Econ, Psy/Soc, Anth/Soc, etc.)

4. Recommendations

Over the next two years, the Social Science faculty should:

1. Examine the BASS degree requirements and structure (SSCI and Concentration requirements).
2. Get the 6-Year Plan to express how the BASS degree is actually delivered (rather than cutting courses to adapt to the plan; i.e., exacerbates the infrequency of course offering issue).
3. Begin process of adding tenure-track or term faculty in Psychology, Government & Economics.