

University of Alaska Board of Regents

Program Approval Summary Form

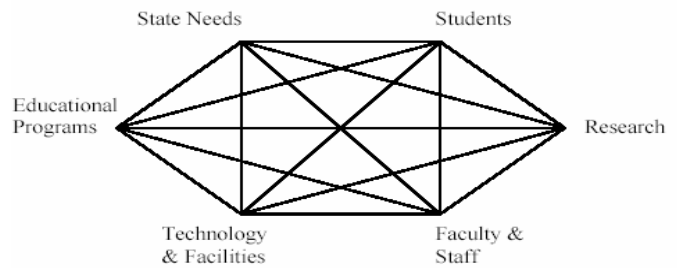
Requirements:

1. 2 pages or less
2. Must be a stand-alone document

MAU: University of Alaska Fairbanks
Tanana Valley Campus
College of Rural and Community Dev.

Title: AAS, Dental Hygiene

Target admission date: Spring 2008



The Tanana Valley Campus, College of Rural and Community development, University of Alaska Fairbanks, requests approval of an Associate of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene to be implemented in the Spring Semester, 2008.

The dental hygiene program is an intensive, science-based and competency-based degree program. Courses proposed for the degree prepare the graduate with the knowledge, skills, attitude, and values to take and pass national and regional dental hygiene written and clinical exams and be licensed in the State of Alaska. The program received initial accreditation through the Commission on Dental Accreditation in August of 2007.

How does the program relate to the **Education** mission of the University of Alaska and the MAU?

*Who promoted the development of the program?

*What process was followed in development of program (including internal and external consultation)

*Impact on existing programs and units across MAU and system, including GERS.

TVC's mission is to provide community-driven education. For more than 20 years, the Fairbanks dental community has been asking UAF to establish a dental hygiene program here in Fairbanks to increase the number of dental hygienists who will remain in the community and serve the dental needs of Fairbanks and Interior Alaska. The proposed AAS in Dental Hygiene would do that. Further, we plan to engage our rural campuses in providing the AAS requirements and the prerequisite courses that will allow rural Alaskan students to compete effectively for admission to the Dental Hygiene program. This science-based, competency-based program provides high quality vocational and technical skills that meets the national standards of the Commission on Dental Accreditation, and will allow graduates to sit for the national and western region exams to become licensed Dental Hygienists.

The decision to initiate a dental hygiene program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks was made after gaining input and advice from the local Fairbanks dental community, the Allied Health Alliance, the administrators of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and Statewide Administration. An external needs survey of professionals, including dental hygienists and dentists, was conducted by Crosby and Associates in Fall of 2005. That survey confirmed the results of a previous survey (early 1990's), and demonstrated a continuing need for additional dental hygienists in the Fairbanks area. A 1999 white paper produced by the southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium documented the magnitude of the dental disease crisis experienced by Alaska Natives. Data from 1990-1999 Indian Health Services surveys revealed that Alaska Native children experience caries at a rate twice the national rate, and that at least a portion of that problem is attributable to a lack of dental professionals, including hygienists, in rural Alaska. Finally, a group of dental professionals serves as a Dental Hygiene Advisory Committee to the TVC Dental Hygiene Program.

What **State Needs** met by this program.

*Information describing program need and why existing programs in UA system are not able to meet it.

An article based on Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) statistics in the October, 2004 *Alaska Economic Trends* predicts an increase of over 40% in the need for dental hygienists, one of the highest rates of anticipated need among the occupations tracked by the state. A related DOLWD report projects 22 annual openings for dental hygienists statewide. The site specifies an average entry-level wage of \$38,960 and a mean salary of \$63,810.

Despite the documented need for hygienists and hygiene services around the state, there is currently only one dental hygiene program at UAA, which has 12 graduates per year. It is not possible to increase the cohort at UAA due to limited operatory capacity. In addition, increasing the capacity of the UAA dental hygiene program does not meet the need for the Interior Alaska and Fairbanks as Anchorage has its own unmet need for dental hygienists and Anchorage may well recruit all the graduates from their own program which would leave the most underserved areas still in need of care.

What are the **Student** opportunities and outcomes? **Enrollment projections?**

The proposed program would admit 6 students per cohort, and by fall of 2010 will have both a first year and second year cohort studying at the same time. Keeping the cohort at 6 students will meet several needs: 1) one student per operatory is required by CODA, and we have only 6 operatories; 2) a faculty:student ratio of 1:6 for all lab and clinical experiences; and 3) we estimate that 6 graduates per years will come close to meeting the needs of Fairbanks and Interior Alaska for dental hygienists.

Vacancy surveys conducted by the UAA Alaska Center for Rural Health indicate that in August 2007 there were approximately 14 vacancies in urban communities and 17 vacancies in rural Alaska. We anticipate that all graduates will be able to obtain employment.

Describe **Research** opportunities:

We do not anticipate establishing research programs in association with this AAS degree program.

Describe **Fiscal Plan** for development and implementation:

- *Identify funding requirement, sources and plan to generate revenue and meet identified costs to include:
 - *Indirect costs to other units (e.g. GERS)
 - ***Faculty and Staff**
 - ***Technology, Facilities** and Equipment

Funding to support the needs surveys, the development of the application for initial accreditation through the Commission on Dental Accreditation, and the hiring of a program director was provided by a combination of funds from TVC, CRCDC, and the office of the Vice President for Health Programs. A funding request to continue support of the program was placed in the FY 08 budget, however, SB 137 rather than general fund money was provided for FY08. Support for the continuation of the program was submitted on the cross-MAU request for Allied Health Program funding for FY09. It was ranked highest of the 4 proposals submitted by UAF. We have received assurances from the Chancellor's Cabinet, and from Karen Perdue, the Vice-President for Health Programs, that this program is a high priority and that funding (\$240K) is assured for the FY09 budget.

Funding for lab supplies and equipment will be borne by the students via lab fees. We anticipate that members of the local dental community will continue to support the program by volunteering their time to train students, provided some equipment and supplies, and developing scholarship support for the students. Further, the Alaska Dental Society is generating an endowment fund for all dental programs within the state.