



Academic Affairs
UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

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Date: April 4, 2022

To: Paul Layer, Vice President of Academics, Students, and Research

Through: Sean Parnell, Chancellor DocuSigned by:
Sean Parnell
1416A9D135514F7...

From: Denise Runge, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs DocuSigned by:
Denise K. Runge
AE7EE55F615543D...

Subject: Proposed Undergraduate Certificate in Ahtna Language Instruction

As part of a larger effort to support, nurture, and grow educational opportunities in Alaska Native Studies, to support the development of faculty expertise based in Indigenous knowledge and pedagogies, to meet community needs, and to deepen critical partnerships, the College of Arts and Sciences is proposing a 30-credit undergraduate certificate in Ahtna Language Instruction. The certificate is being proposed at a critical moment in the preservation of Alaska Native languages, and it is designed to support language and culture survival, and revitalization.

The certificate supports future instructors through a series of courses that focus on Indigenous language revitalization, field methods, language acquisition strategies, and teaching mentorship. It complements the existing minor in Alaska Native Studies and the Associate of Arts in Alaska Native Studies. The curriculum was designed in cooperation with the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC) and Cheesh'na Village, building on these local partnerships. The program will be available fully by distance, meeting the needs of local students and allowing for flexibility for the students and the faculty.

The program is unique in the UA System and complements Alaska Native culture and language programming at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the University of Alaska Southeast.

Existing funding is sufficient for this program, which is supported by current faculty and coursework already in place.

The program proposal has been approved by the program faculty, dean, appropriate UAA curriculum committees, Faculty Senate, provost and chancellor.

Attachments:

- BOR Program Action Request
- Prospectus
- Catalog Copy
- Letter of Support



Board of Regents Program Action Request
Proposal to Add or Change a Program of Study
 University of Alaska

1a. UA University UAA	1b. School or College College of Arts and Sciences	1c. Department or Program Alaska Native Studies																																						
2. Complete Program Title: Undergraduate Certificate, Ahtna Language Instruction																																								
3. Type of Program:																																								
Undergraduate Certificate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Associate <input type="checkbox"/>	Baccalaureate <input type="checkbox"/>																																						
Master's <input type="checkbox"/>	Doctorate <input type="checkbox"/>	Post-Baccalaureate Certificate <input type="checkbox"/>																																						
4. Type of Action: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Add <input type="checkbox"/> Change																																								
Implementation Semester: Fall Year: 2022																																								
6. Projected Revenue and Expenditure Summary: Provide information for the 5 th year after program change approval if a baccalaureate or doctoral degree program; for the 3 rd year after program approval if a master's or associate degree program; or for the 2 nd year after program approval if a graduate or undergraduate certificate. If information is provided for another year, specify () and explain in the program summary attached. Note that revenues and expenditures are not always entirely new; some may be current (see 7d.)																																								
<table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Projected Annual Revenues in FY</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Unrestricted</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>General Fund</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student Tuition & Fees</td> <td>\$ 386,323.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indirect Cost Recovery</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TVEP or Other (specify):</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Restricted</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Federal Receipts</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TVEP or Other (specify):</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL REVENUES</td> <td>\$ 386,323.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Projected Annual Revenues in FY		Unrestricted		General Fund		Student Tuition & Fees	\$ 386,323.00	Indirect Cost Recovery	n/a	TVEP or Other (specify):	n/a	Restricted		Federal Receipts	n/a	TVEP or Other (specify):	n/a	TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 386,323.00	<table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Projected Annual Expenditures in FY</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Salaries & benefits (faculty and staff)</td> <td>\$ 442,627.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other (commodities, services, etc.)</td> <td>\$ 4,200.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL EXPENDITURES:</td> <td>\$ 446,827.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">One-time Expenditures to Initiate Program (if >\$250,000) (These are costs in addition to the annual costs, above.)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 1</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 2</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 3</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 4</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Projected Annual Expenditures in FY		Salaries & benefits (faculty and staff)	\$ 442,627.00	Other (commodities, services, etc.)	\$ 4,200.00	TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	\$ 446,827.00	One-time Expenditures to Initiate Program (if >\$250,000) (These are costs in addition to the annual costs, above.)		Year 1	n/a	Year 2	n/a	Year 3	n/a	Year 4	n/a
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Page # of attached summary where the budget is discussed, including initial phase-in:		4-5																																						
7. Budget Status. Items a., b., and c. indicate the source(s) of the general fund revenue specified in item 6. If any grants or contracts will supply revenue needed by the program indicate amount anticipated and expiration date, if applicable.																																								
Revenue source	Continuing	One-Time																																						
a. In current legislative budget request	n/a	n/a																																						
b. Additional appropriation required	n/a	n/a																																						
c. Funded through new internal UA university redistribution	n/a	n/a																																						
d. Funds currently committed to the program[1]	\$ 250,000.00	n/a																																						
e. Funded all or in part by external funds, expiration date	n/a	n/a																																						
f. Other funding source (specify type):	n/a	n/a																																						
8. Facilities. New or substantially (>\$25,000 cost) renovated facilities will be required.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No																																						
If yes, discuss the extent, probable cost, and anticipated funding source(s), in addition to those listed in sections 6 and 7 above.																																								
9. Projected Enrollments (headcount of majors). If this is a program discontinuation request, project the teach-out enrollments.																																								
Year 1: <input type="text" value="8"/>	Year 2: <input type="text" value="8"/>	Year 3: <input type="text" value="10"/> Year 4: <input type="text" value="10"/>																																						
Page number of attached summary where demand for this program is discussed:		4																																						

10. Number² of new TA or faculty hires anticipated (or number of positions eliminated if a program discontinuation): Graduate TA <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> Adjunct <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> Term <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> Tenure track <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> Note: Existing faculty will be teaching existing courses	11. Number² of TAs or faculty to be reassigned: Graduate TA <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> Adjunct <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> Term <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> Tenure track <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> Former assignment of any reassigned faculty: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/> For more information see attached summary page: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="4-5"/>
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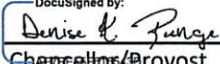
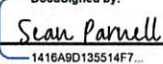
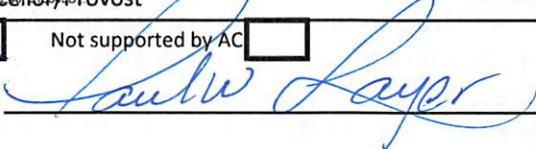
12. Other programs affected by the proposed action, including those at other campuses (please list):	
Program Affected	Anticipated Effect
AKNS AA	Possible increase in course demand and enrollment
AKNS Minor	Possible increase in course demand and enrollment
UAF AAS/UC Native Language Education	Complements Alaska Native language offerings
UAS BLA Liberal Arts, Alaska Native Languages and Studies emphasis	Complements Alaska Native language offerings

Page number of attached summary where effects on other programs are discussed: 3

13. Specialized accreditation or other external program certification needed or anticipated. List all that apply or 'none': <div style="text-align: center;">none</div>	14. Aligns with University or campus mission, goals, core themes, and objectives (list): UA Goals: Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in students, faculty, and staff; foster academic excellence for student success; contribute to economic development, skilled workforce, and engaged citizenship. UAA: Directly supports the mission and follows UAA 2025 aspirations 1, 2, and 3. Page in attached summary where alignment is discussed: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="1-2"/>
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15. State needs met by this program (list): Creates a new generation of teachers to address the critical need to preserve Alaska Native languages (p. 3).	16. Program is initially planned to be: (check all that apply) Available to students attending classes at campuses <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available to students via e-Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Partially available to students via e-Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (75%) Page # in attached summary where e-Learning is discussed: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="2"/>
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17. If this program is an addition, would program be eligible for State's Eligible Training Provider List program?
 Yes No [\(Click here for more information\)](#)

Submitted by:  April 4, 2022 Chancellor/Provost	Submitted by:  April 4, 2022 Date:
Consensus support of AC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not supported by AC <input type="checkbox"/>	Recommend approval by VPASR  Date: 4/14/2022
Recommend disapproval by VPASR	Date:

²Net FTE (full-time equivalents). For example, if a faculty member will be reassigned from another program, but his/her original program will hire a replacement, there is one net new faculty member. Use fractions if appropriate. Graduate TAs are normally 0.5 FTE. The numbers should be consistent with the revenue/expenditure information provided.

Attachments: Summary of Degree or Certificate Program Proposal Other (optional)
 Updated January 2020

[\[1\]Sometimes the courses required by a new degree or certificate program are already being taught by a UA university, e.g., as a minor requirement. Similarly, other program needs like equipment may already be owned. 100% of the value is indicated even though the course or other resource may be shared.](#)

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN AHTNA LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The College of Arts and Sciences is proposing a 30-credit Undergraduate Certificate in Ahtna Language Instruction. It complements the proposed Undergraduate Certificate in Dena'ina Language Instruction and uses some of the same resources. The certificate is being proposed at a critical moment in the preservation of Alaska Native languages, and it is designed to ensure not only language and culture survival, but revitalization. The certificate aims to support teachers through a series of courses that focus on Indigenous language revitalization, field methods, language acquisition strategies, and teaching mentorship. A long-term goal is that the certificate and others like it might replace the current Type M Limited Certificate process as it relates to the teaching of Alaska Native languages in Alaska schools.

The program will integrate Indigenous perspectives and highlight Indigenous pedagogy. It will draw upon and enhance the important relationship with the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC) and Cheesh'na Village, which are two Ahtna Dene Villages that are working on the Ahtna Language for their communities. It will build upon the important relationship between Chickaloon, Cheesh'na, UAA, and Kenai Peninsula College (KPC). This unique partnership will create a pathway to obtain college credit for students who can demonstrate a teaching standard and teacher effectiveness in a Dene language within and outside of the university system.

The program will be offered in-person and via distance to support all Dene language students wherever they currently reside. The state of the Ahtna language is fragile and offering opportunities for learners across geographical regions will support maximum enrollment and increase the number of language speakers and teachers.

MISSION AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

University of Alaska System Goals and Measures

The certificate aligns with several UA Goals.

The proposed certificate directly contributes to the following UA Goals: *Promote diversity, equity and inclusion in students, faculty and staff*; *Foster academic excellence for student success*; and *Contribute to Alaska's economic development, skilled workforce and engaged citizenship*. The certificate is designed to intentionally nurture a pipeline of Indigenous faculty, who will teach language using Indigenous pedagogy and who will develop the standards for Ahtna language education in the state. The program will improve Alaska Native participation and success, it will create more opportunities for Alaska Native students, and it will create spaces within the UA System where Alaska Native students and faculty to feel empowered and supported. The program will contribute to Alaska's economic development, skilled workforce, and engaged citizenship by increasing educational attainment rates and addressing disparities in rural education opportunities.

Alignment with the Alaska Native Success Initiative (ANSI)

The Alaska Native Success Initiative formed a subcommittee under the UAA provost and the executive director for Alaska Native Education and Outreach. Called the Alaska Native Curriculum Development Committee (ANCDC), the committee consists of faculty from Alaska Native Studies in Anchorage, Kenai Peninsula College, and Kodiak College. Dr. Sharon Lind of the College of Business and Public Policy and Dr. Christina Stuve of Kenai Peninsula College co-chair the committee, which has focused on curriculum development that meets student and community needs and respects the expertise and knowledge of elders and speakers of the languages being taught. The committee also acknowledges the role of Alaska Native communities and organizations in guiding and supporting appropriate and relevant curriculum.

University of Alaska Anchorage Mission and Strategic Plan – UAA 2025

The degree directly aligns with UAA's mission and strategic plan.

The proposed Ahtna certificate directly supports the Mission of UAA and contributes to Aspirations 1, 2, and 3 of UAA 2025. The certificate directly aligns with *Aspiration 1: We put students first* by providing multiple opportunities for students to develop and increase intercultural fluency, one of UAA's core student learning competencies. It promotes *Aspiration 2: We create a culture of equity and including by embracing our diversity*. Through the use of Alaska Native language instructors, the program increases the diverse makeup of UAA's faculty to more directly reflect the diversity of the local community. The very curriculum of the program increases the visibility of Alaska Native languages, demonstrating that UAA values the people of this place, the Dene. The process of developing this program has already and will continue to increase and strengthen the important community partnership between KPC, the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC) and Cheesh'na Village. Finally, the program aligns with and contributes to progress on *Aspiration 3: We embrace our role as a trusted and respected community partner*, increasing the capacity of language speakers and teachers and promoting the cultural strength and shared values of community members, local tribes, and Native Corporations.

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION AND SPECIAL CERTIFICATIONS

At this time there are no program accreditations or special certifications. The UAA Alaska Native Studies chair and the Dena'ina Language Institute have been working with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to create a pathway or partnership within the K-12 system that will recognize the program as the standard for Dene Language instruction in K-12 school settings.

E-LEARNING OPTIONS

The program is available 50-99% through distance delivery.

AFFECTED PROGRAMS

Most of the courses also count toward the UAA minor in Alaska Native Studies and the UAA Associate of Arts (AA) in Alaska Native Studies. The current proposal and any changes to the certificate moving forward would not affect specific requirements within the minor or the AA.

This program will be unique in the UA System. It complements Alaska Native language and culture programming at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the University of Alaska Southeast. The UAF Associate of Applied Science (AAS) and Undergraduate Certificate (UC) in Native Language Education include concentrations in Athabascan, Inupiaq Eskimo, and Central Yup'ik Eskimo.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Creation of this certificate is part of a larger project to develop practices and expectations in developing proficiency in teaching that align with Indigenous practices. The goal is to come up with recognized standards that can be used to both teach and learn in these fragile languages. While the word "standards" is a trademark of a Westernized view of knowledge, it is being used here to acknowledge that there is a need for a pathway to legitimize a teachable language. That pathway and guidance can then be implemented in the local school district and in the local Tribal school, Ya Ne Dah Ah School. The certificate is supported by the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC) and the Cheesh'na' Village, who envision a partnership between KPC, CVTC, CV, and UAA through the newly formed Ahtna certificate programs. The program will become the model for teacher training and methodology for delivering Dene-based language.

This program by its very nature is designed to support students, particularly students of Indigenous language backgrounds and from rural communities. KPC's previous experience offering Alaska Native languages demonstrates that students of different Indigenous language backgrounds gravitate toward any Alaska Native language course as part of their personal student success strategy. They feel supported and valued in these courses. Seeing Elder adjunct instructors on campus, as instructors, has been both inspiring and reaffirming, regardless of the student's particular Indigenous language background. Students from Aniak and Chevak (Yup'ik and Cup'ik) have taken these classes precisely because of the connection they have to preserving their own sense of identity and culture. Student success and support will continue to be a vital component of the classes and the program as a whole.

STUDENT DEMAND AND STATE NEEDS

UAA has offered some options for students (language learners) to learn an Alaska Native language, but there is no direct training program that encourages students to sustain a Native language over a series of courses. In 2018 in a biennial report, the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council stated that "Alaska Natives may lose their last fluent speakers by the end of the 21st century." Governor Bill Walker declared an emergency for Alaska Native Languages demonstrating that the State of Alaska has recognized the importance of and need to preserve the 20 recognized Alaska Native Languages. Without creating a new generation of teachers at the novice levels of these Dene languages, the intermediate and

advanced language speakers and teachers will be perpetually committed to teaching the same lower-division courses.

Currently, there are very few Ahtna language experts to teach Ahtna courses at the college level. Demand for the courses is increasing. In order to meet the increasing demand for Ahtna language instructors, both KIT and KPC have recognized the need to build teacher/instructor capacity in appropriate Indigenous teaching methods, materials, techniques, pedagogy, etc. while also increasing the language speaking capacity of students to meet the workforce need for Ahtna speakers and instructors.

The numbers below reflect the input of the community partners.

Enrollment Projections

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Headcount	8	8	10	10

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The faculty have expanded four existing Alaska Native Studies courses to include sections with a focus on Ahtna language and culture. The faculty also developed three new courses that focus on Alaska Native language revitalization, second language acquisition curriculum design and teaching methods in an Indigenous language, and a language instructor practicum. The new courses will support both the Undergraduate Certificate in Ahtna Language Instruction as well as the Undergraduate Certificate in Dena’ina Language Instruction. All the courses have been approved through the regular curriculum process.

Initially, the program will be taught by adjuncts. There is a limited pool of adjunct faculty who can teach the courses, as the human resources in Dene Languages are limited, and adjuncts are further limited by the number of courses they are allowed to teach each year. As the program develops and grows, it is, therefore, anticipated that there will be a need for a full-time term or tenure track position at Kenai Peninsula College to stabilize this program and future programming related to Indigenous language development. Partnerships with local tribes and Indigenous communities will be critical to the program sustainability, as the university does not have the language resources within to sustain the programming without these vital community partnerships.

FACULTY AND STAFF

The primary faculty and adjuncts for this program are recognized leaders in their language and have been working in the field teaching Dena’ina and Ahtna courses, attending and presenting at: culture camps, K-12 schools, language revitalization conferences, linguistic conferences, Native Education conferences.

As noted above, it is advised and anticipated that KPC will eventually need a full-time term or tenure track position to stabilize this, and future programming related to Indigenous language development at Kenai Peninsula College and UAA.

ADEQUACY OF FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, LIBRARY AND OTHER RESOURCES

KPC has created an Alaska Native Language Lab that is used as a teaching and research space specifically for Alaska Native Languages. There are library resources related to Alaska Native Studies and Languages and a growing collection of teaching materials.

Attachments:

Undergraduate Certificate Ahtna Language Instruction Catalog Copy
Board of Regents Program Action Request Form
Letter of Support

Undergraduate Certificate in Ahtna Language Instruction Catalog Copy

The Undergraduate Certificate in Ahtna Language Instruction prepares students for applying knowledge, resources, and skills appropriate for a variety of entry-level jobs that use Ahtna Dene language and for teaching beginning Ahtna Language. Students who earn this certificate will be able to demonstrate a level of low intermediate speech ability and demonstrate proficiency in beginning Ahtna language instruction. The style of Ahtna taught in this program is Western and Central dialects.

Admission Requirements

- Complete the Admission Requirements for Undergraduate Certificates.

Special Considerations

- Students who complete a field study placement may need to complete a background check if their site requires one.

Graduation Requirements

- Complete the General University Requirements for Undergraduate Certificates.
- Complete the following major requirements with a minimum grade of C:

Course	Title	Credits
AKNS A101H	Elementary Ahtna Language I	4
AKNS A102H	Elementary Ahtna Language II	4
AKNS A114H	Ahtna Reading and Writing	3
AKNS A240H	Alaska Native Cultural Orientation: Ahtna	3
AKNS A292B	Alaska Native Language Conversational Fluency Intensive	1-3
AKNS A301	Introduction to Indigenous Language Revitalization	1
AKNS A395	Native Language Instructor Practicum	3
AKNS A421	Indigenous Language Curriculum Design & Instruction	3
AKNS A495A	Indigenous Language Instructor Internship	3
Total		25-27

¹ Must be taken in Ahtna

A minimum of 30 credits is required for the degree.

Program Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating with a Certificate in Ahtna Language Instruction will be able to:

- **Demonstrate low intermediate speaking proficiency, with conversational speaking skills as described in the Ahtna Athabascan Proficiency Standards**
- **Read and comprehend basic Ahtna, including words and sentences pertaining to everyday topics, at a level comparable to their speaking proficiency on Ahtna Athabascan Proficiency Standards**
- **Locate and assess Ahtna Dene language resources and reference materials for diverse situations and proficiency levels.**
- **Demonstrate knowledge of Ahtna history, culture, arts, and issues in the Ahtna region.**
- **Examine cross-cultural communication, cultural values, and working with Elders.**
- **Write beginner lessons in Ahtna language**
- **Deliver beginner lessons in Ahtna language in classroom settings.**



Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (Nay'dini'aa Na' Kayax)

January 26, 2022

Chief Gary Harrison,
Chairman/Elder

Cheryl Sherman,
Vice-Chairwoman

Philip Ling
Secretary

Doug Wade,
Treasurer/Elder

Sondra Shaginoff-Stuart, MA
Chair of Alaska Native Studies
University of Alaska Anchorage

s/shaginoffstuart@alaska.edu

Re: Letter of Support

Dear Sondra:

Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (CVTC) enthusiastically supports the development of the Occupational Endorsement Certificate (OEC) and Native Language Instructors Certificate program through the University of Alaska.

CVTC has invested a tremendous amount of time and resources in language revitalization of our ancestral Ahtna language. Having these new certificate programs will greatly enhance our ability to revitalize our imperiled language. Not only will these programs increase our chances of procuring additional funding support for our Language and Cultural Department, but they will also increase our chances of procuring additional funding for offering scholarships in support of these programs.

We commit to support the University of Alaska on these programs and will offer our staff currently working in the Language and Cultural Department the opportunity to participate in the OEC program and the Native Language Instructors Certificate program.

This is a wonderful endeavor, and we are very excited to partner with the University of Alaska on this critical programming. If we can offer any additional support, please let us know.

May Nek'eltaeni (Creator) Guide our Footsteps,

Lisa Wade
Executive Director
Chickaloon Village Traditional Council

Lisa Wade,
Executive Director

Serena Martino,
Executive Assistant