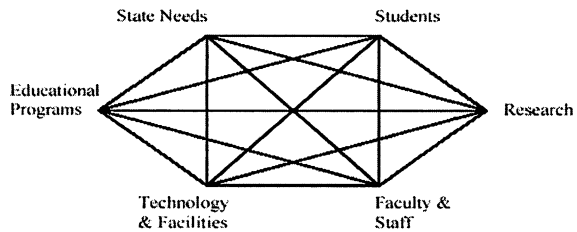


X. Regents Guidelines

University of Alaska Board of Regents Program Approval Summary Form

MAU: University of Alaska Fairbanks
Title and Brief Description:
Master of Education in Special Education

Target date: Fall 2009



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

There is substantial evidence that indicates a chronic shortage of fully certified professional Special Education Teachers in Alaska, and throughout the United States. The Master of Education in Special Education allows students throughout the state, including those in rural areas, to complete the necessary professional training to become certificated as K-12 Special Education Teachers. The proposed certificate program with its well-defined set of courses will allow the university to recognize the professional training students have completed to receive this Licensure. It will be useful for job applicants, those seeking professional advancement, and for employers who will have better documentation of the capabilities of their potential employees. In addition, the School of Education, UAF, and UA statewide will be able to gather and analyze data on post-bachelor's or post-Master's Licensure candidates in a far more accurate manner than is currently possible.

As a public institution the University of Alaska responds to the interests and needs of the people of Alaska. Close working relationships between the K-12 public education system and the State's higher education system are essential for the social and economic well being of our state. The Master of Education in Special Education is a direct response to the stated mission of the University of Alaska, which is to "address the needs of the North and its diverse peoples". There most certainly is a need in Alaska for professional Special Education Teachers and for Special Education Teacher preparation programs that prepare people to professionally and respectfully work in our unique Northern context with Alaska's diverse peoples. We would serve as a model to demonstrate how gender, racial and cultural diversity can strengthen a university and society.

In addition to supporting the Mission of the University of Alaska, the Master of Education in Special Education at UAF directly supports many of the primary goals of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Strategic Plan. This is accomplished through the following: providing high quality graduate education for traditional and non-traditional students; forming active collaborations with school districts and communities throughout the state by requiring on-going fieldwork in those arenas; actively recruiting Alaska Native students; and providing professional development opportunities for practicing special education teachers in rural and urban areas.

What state needs met by this program:

The proposed Master of Education in Special Education will help meet the critical shortage for special education teachers, In addition, anecdotal evidence from the Fairbanks community,

Alaska State Special Education Directors' meeting supports the chronic shortage of certificated K-12 Special Education Teachers in the state. Supporting data is also available from each of the 54 Alaska School Districts, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, and the Alaska Teacher Placement Service's annual comprehensive report Statewide Educator Supply and Demand. All public education positions are high demand in Alaska, and special education is the greatest need in virtually all school districts. The comment that has been repeated numerous times is "It's about time, Fairbanks needs it. We've needed it for a long time." Followed by, "When can I enroll?"

What are the student opportunities and outcomes? Enrollment projections?

The continued shortage of Special Education teachers statewide will ensure job placement. Alaska Teacher Placement Survey of Administrators at the 2008 Legislative Fly-In in Juneau reported special education (23%) and related service (13%) together compromise 39% of the hardest positions to fill.

Describe research opportunities:

The Master of Education in special education assures the ongoing involvement of the UAF education faculty in K-12 education throughout the state. The many fieldwork requirements and the intensive Practicum/Portfolio internship are dependent upon the continuing close working partnerships with schools, districts, and communities. Faculty may research success of students receiving instruction from highly qualified special educators, the impact of having a qualified special educator in the community versus itinerant, retention of qualified teachers, effects on response to intervention or a myriad of other topics.

Describe Fiscal Plan for development and implementation:

The Master of Education in Special Education anticipates a need for additional funding for adding the proposed Masters program. The Teacher Education Group for the FY10 operating Budget Request lists Special Education and the number one priority need for the next three to five years. In addition, to make an across-MAU program possible, the Teacher Education Group supports the establishment of special education as its first priority, and recommends the addition of one Special Education Faculty at UAF. This position has continued to be in the proposed budget to date. SOE has submitted recruitment information to the Provost Office for dissemination once the budget is approved. Additional support staff will also be needed which will be funded internally