

Associate of Applied Science in Health Sciences Assessment Plan 2024

1. Program Overview

The University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) Health Science Department provides students with the knowledge, skills, and learning opportunities to achieve or continue education and training toward a career in health care. Health Sciences programs provide a supportive learning environment through small class sizes, individualized advice based on career pathways, and instructors trained and credentialed in health sciences fields.

Associate of Applied Science in Health Sciences (from the catalog)

The Associate of Applied Science in Health Sciences provides the foundational healthcare knowledge, skills and behaviors for graduates to obtain employment in a healthcare-related position, continue education in a professional health program, or enhance development of those who are employed in healthcare settings. Students need to consult with a Health Sciences advisor before registering for courses.

Description of the Degree Options 60 credits

General Education Requirements (18-19 credits):

- WRTG 111 Writing Across Contexts
- WTRG 211 Writing and the Humanities OR WRTG 212 Writing in the Professions
- COMM S111 Fundamentals of Oral Communication **OR** COMM S235 Small Group Communication & Team Building **OR** COMM S237 Interpersonal Communication **OR** COMM S241 Public Speaking
- MATH 105 Intermediate Algebra **OR** HS 116 Math in Healthcare
- PSY111 Intro to Psychology **OR** PSY S250 Lifespan Development
- HS135 Medical Terminology

The Health Sciences AAS emphasis areas (41-42 credits) include the following:

- *General Health Emphasis:* The flexible curriculum provides a foundation for entering a career in healthcare, offers courses that incorporate multiple healthcare pathways, and increases transferability to other professional programs using health sciences courses. Elective courses provide students the ability to choose courses that are appropriate to their individual career and educational goals.
- *Medical Assisting Emphasis:* Medical Assistants are multiskilled health professionals specifically educated to work in a variety of healthcare settings performing clinical and administrative duties. The practice of medical assisting necessitates mastery of a complex body of knowledge and specialized skills requiring both formal education and practical experience that serve as standards for entry into the profession. The Medical Assisting Certificate feeding into the Health Science AAS assesses the accreditation-specific required program learning outcomes and are submitted separately by the Medical Assisting Program Director.
- *Medical Coding Emphasis:* An area of Health Information Management specifically focused on coding/classifications systems at both the inpatient and outpatient level. The emphasis provides entry-level skills in healthcare coding, and a pathway to an Associate of Applied Science degree. National credentialing exams are available at both entry and advanced levels. The Health Information Management Coding Specialist Certificate learning outcomes are assessed under the Health Information Management program and are submitted separately by the Health Information Management Program Director.
- *Behavioral Health Emphasis:* The Health Science AAS with Behavioral Health emphasis provides students with additional career opportunities as entry-level behavioral health workers in human and social service organizations, the private healthcare sector, or as a foundation for further education in behavioral health.

The UAS occupational endorsements feeding into the Health Science AAS are required to have program learning outcomes but are not required to submit a formal annual assessment report. These include:

- Behavioral Health Occupational Endorsement
- Certificate Certified Nurse Aide Occupational Endorsement

In addition to the emphasis areas, students fulfill their degree requirements in any of the following advisor-approved electives: Business, Behavioral Health Sciences, Biology, Chemistry, Health Science, Health Information Management, Psychology, Sociology, or Statistics.

2. Program Level Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

1. Demonstrate effective listening, verbal, and written communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information in healthcare environments.
2. Incorporate knowledge of biological, psychological, sociological, cultural, spiritual, economic, and ethical factors into a healthcare foundation.
3. Integrate critical thinking and problem solving appropriate for student's allied health discipline.
4. Exhibit proficiency in the emphasis areas leading to licensure/certification to help meet Alaska's health workforce needs.

3. How the data is collected on the PLOs (rubrics, portfolios, etc.)

The Health Science Department will analyze outcome data from the programs feeding into the Health Science AAS, Institutional Effectiveness dashboard, Banner and UAOnline.

Program Outcome	Outcome Assessment
Demonstrate effective listening, verbal, and written communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information in healthcare environments.	The student will obtain employment in a healthcare-related position or continue their education in health profession programs.
Incorporate knowledge of biological, psychological, sociological, cultural, spiritual, economic, and ethical factors into a healthcare foundation.	The student will have completed the AAS and emphasis area requirement with a C (2.0) or better.
Integrate critical thinking and problem solving appropriate for student's allied health discipline.	The student will obtain employment in a healthcare-related position or continue their education in health profession programs.
Exhibit proficiency in the emphasis areas leading to licensure/certification to help meet Alaska's health workforce needs.	The student will have attained applicable licensure/certification in Medical Assisting, Medical Coding, or Behavioral Health emphasis areas.

4. The data collected on the PLOs during the previous academic year (assessment period)

Health Sciences faculty submitted the new PLOs and significant curriculum changes to the UAS Curriculum Committee in the 2023-24 academic year which were approved, however, it may take several years of data under the new program design to identify trends within this new design. Additionally, the Health Science AAS doesn't have a Program Coordinator assigned to complete data collection and assessment after the full-time position was cut in 2019 due to budget. Assessment is regularly being done in the pathways leading to the AAS with the exception of the new General Health emphasis area.

5. An evaluation/analysis of the data collected

As noted, due to the redesign of the AAS pending approval from the Curriculum Committee, outcome evaluation wasn't pursued during 2023-24.

6. Conclusions and plans for program improvement

One minor change to the Health Science AAS will be submitted to the curriculum committee this year in the area of the General Health Emphasis. Since BHS 201 recommends BHS 101 as a prerequisite course, we will use BHS 101 as the emphasis area requirement. Students will still have the option of applying further BHS courses in the electives area of the degree.

After consultation with Health Sciences administration and advising, the Health Sciences faculty sent a memo to the Interim Provost recommending suspending admission to the Pre-Nursing and Pre-Rad Tech certificates feeding into the Health Science AAS since they have been removed from the list of programs available for federal funding and present significant advising challenges. A response was received informing us that a task force consisting of the Career Education Dean, Sitka Campus Director and two advisors would be formed which would determine the different pathways for students, provide a guide for the students and the advisors, and make a final decision on the suspension or recommended redesign of the Pre-Nursing, Pre-Rad Tech certificates. Faculty request to be part of information gathering and decision-making process.

Without a formal Health Sciences AAS Program Coordinator since 2019, existing faculty volunteered to temporarily take on some of the department duties on a rotating basis in October 2022 after discussion with the Dean and Campus Directors. In the 2023-24 Assessment Report to the Provost, faculty committed to collaborate with the Career Ed Dean and Directors during the 2024-25 academic year to solidify the Health Sciences department structure and clarify who will have designated workload tasks and responsibility to oversee future data gathering and reporting on the Health Sciences AAS. The faculty request guidance and follow up on formalizing the title, structure, responsibilities, and workload designation to support assessment, communication, and advocacy in the Health Sciences department.

The Sitka Campus Director is retiring in December 2024 which will significantly affect Health Science faculty, as that position supervises the majority of health program faculty. We anticipate a period of transition as the new director is onboarded and look forward to regular communication to support the needs of UAS health Sciences.