

Please provide a brief summary of the following:

1. **Names of programs, initiatives, or activities in your area aimed at improving Alaska Native student success, and a brief summary of the overall purpose of the activities (e.g. improve academic outcomes, increase connection to campus resources).**

We are a small campus and do not have a lot of formal “Programs” though we have a lot of guiding practices. I will outline some of these practices, though they mostly apply to our Rural Alaskan Native (AN) population. Local AN students do not self-identify or seek out these opportunities as much with the exception of the Dena’ina language program.

As one of our newly hired adjuncts stated, “In an indigenous practice, knowledge cannot be transferred without relationship.” With that stated, one of the activities we promote in Counseling and Advising is the building of relationships. This starts even in the recruitment process. We make sure to have face-to-face contact from recruitment to admissions to retention. This begins with our Rural and Native Student coordinator and sometimes our local Elder working with students in their home communities, school fairs, at AFN, or NYO.

Academic

AKNS language classes

We are a small campus but we have a strong AKNS languages program. We currently offer three Alaskan Native languages courses (Ahtna, Dena’ina, and Yup’ik). Each of these classes is taught by an Elder. Several years ago when we built our Residence Hall we had several students who discussed the isolation of being from a small place; one of the students commented that it was very lonely to never hear his language. A few years later we began to promote the Dena’ina class. That semester we had six students from housing sign up for the Dena’ina course even though they were Cup’ik and Yup’ik. They identified that being in a classroom with people like them increased their resilience and created connection to other students from other regions. We identified that students from rural communities typically attend the AKNS language class even when doing poorly in other academic courses. Our language courses have the following elements:

- Connection to *place*
- Connection to traditional *cultural values*
- Connection to traditional *cultural activities*
- Connection to *Elders*
- Provide *Academic Grounding* and some stability (as they are 4 credit courses) as most students attend, pass, and are enthusiastic in the language classes.

Alaska Native Studies Club

The Alaska Native Studies Club is a new club this Fall 2018. Students had a desire to create a student led group that could meet for fellowship and student growth opportunities. This club holds weekly Yup’ik/Cup’ik and Inupiat Dance Practice and has already been asked to perform at several community gatherings. They hope to raise money to attend AFN, WEO or the Camai Festival in Bethel.

- Peer Academic Support
- Establish a Native cultural presence on campus
- Educate non-natives about Native issues
- Develop leadership skills on campus.

Developmental Advisor

The Developmental Advisor provides case management for all students in WRTG A090, WRTG A110, MATH 054, and MATH A055. She checks with faculty to identify with students doing poorly and she provides outreach to each individual student. Many rural students fall under her caseload and she builds a relationship with each student so if they are doing poorly they are more likely to reach out prior to academic withdrawal or failure.

- Socialize to the expectations of higher education
- Familiarize students with Campus resources (Counseling and Advising, Rural and Native Student Services, Learning Center, Library, Testing Center)
- Refer students to various Campus resources

Support Services and Activities

Cultural Activities

Rural and Native Student Services have served students and the community through organizing special and ongoing cultural activities. The Rural and Native Student Services Coordinator has led many beading and painting workshops, activity nights, and invited guest speakers and indigenous artists to campus. These artists have included: Melissa Shaginoff, Joel Isaak, June Pardue, Rochelle Adams, and Sassa Peterson. These cultural presentations allowed for development of a Qaspeq making credited course.

- Sustain cultural practices
- Connection to Identity
- Create a recognized Alaskan Native presence on campus
- Educate the public about Alaskan Native Arts and cultural practices

Elders in Residence

During 2015 Rural and Native Student Services Coordinator Sondra Shaginoff-Stuart started an Elders-in-Residence Program at our KRC Residential Hall. During the second year of this program Jeanne Maxim (Ahtna Elder and Adjunct Instructor) and Helen Dick (Dena'ina Elder and Adjunct Instructor) spent significant time living on campus in an Elder suite. This made a difficult semester more bearable as three of the students lost four of their cousins of the same age to suicide that semester. They visited, prayed, and sought advisement from the Elders during this difficult time. All of the students left for the funerals and all remarkably returned. Students frequently stated they felt safer with an Elder nearby and a few commented that they felt more accountable to stay focused and were less likely to violate alcohol rules because of the Elder's presence on campus. In addition, other Elders such as Max Chickalusion would visit campus to provide spiritual and emotional support.

- Access to Elders and traditional knowledge
- Reinforcement of traditional values
- Encouragement from Elders
- Teach Non-Native populations how to engage with Elders

Basketball Team

While this is non-academic, it should be noted that all KRC students are eligible to be part of the KRC Basketball Club. However, this was initially inspired by rural students who wanted to play basketball. This team has been sponsored by both KRC and Kenaitze Indian Tribe. Transportation occurs via Rural and Native Student Services Coordinator and volunteer efforts of Counseling and Advising Faculty and Recruitment staff.

Monthly Alaskan Native Foods Local Potluck

Students are transported to the local Native Foods Potluck at the Dena'ina Wellness Center in Kenai every first Monday. This helps students celebrate native foods and visit with local Elders and community members.

- Connection to Elders
- Access to familiar foods
- Access to visiting with relatives or community members
- Access to medical care (signing up and engagement with local IHS)

Ceremony

KPC has invited Elders on campus and provided off-campus opportunities to be involved in Healing Ceremonies. Recognition of the importance of Ceremony to culture, KPC held a Healing Ceremony on-campus after the suicides in Hooper Bay during Fall 2016. In addition, KPC has held closing ceremonies with Elders and students at the conclusion of semester at the Kenaitze SetNet.

- Access to Elders and traditional knowledge
- Reinforcement of traditional values
- Encouragement from Elders

Peer Ambassador

This student hire program is a peer program that educates students in a peer-to-peer model from recruitment and admissions to transition into school and place at KPC.

- Connection to other students
- Connection to other Native Students

Overall Process and Procedure

All students identifying as Alaskan Native are asked during Counseling and Advising if they know who the Rural and Native Student Services Coordinator is. At least, they are given her card and she is notified of the student, but if available, students are brought to her office to "meet and greet" her and become familiar with the KRC gathering space and the Rural and Native Student Services Coordinator and Services available through that office.

- Connection to KPC resources
- Connection to Rural and Native Student Services

2. Number of Alaska Native students served and for how long? Do you also serve non-Native students, and if so approximately how many in relation to Alaska Native students?

I am unsure about how to respond. We serve all students who come through Counseling and Advising or sign up to language courses for as long as they take courses. We consistently serve 15 core students at a high intensity (meaning involvement of three or more of the above activities) but will see about 30-40 every semester for advising appointments.

AKNS Students make up roughly 4% of students served in Counseling and Advising.

3. How do you measure the success of the programs/activities? If you do not currently collect any data, please give examples of how you might demonstrate an impact on student success.

We do not currently collect data but would be interested in participating or leading research on the use of language class in AN student retention.

We could measure success by:

- Completed semester
- Maintenance of Satisfactory Academic Progress
- Repeat enrollment from semester- to semester, particularly from Spring to Fall
- Positive self-identity
- Student Satisfaction Survey

Please provide your unit's contact person name/email/phone for follow up questions on this survey.

Christina Stuve, cjstuve@alaska.edu, 907-690-3298, 907-262-0335