

**ALASKA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM (MAP)**

Information for Students, Advisors, Mentors/ Specialists, and Thesis Committee Members

Overview:

The Master of Arts Program (MAP) at Alaska Pacific University is a self-directed graduate degree program designed for those professionals interested in pursuing advanced learning who may not be attracted to, or well served by, the traditional classroom approach.

The MAP is a three-phase 36-credit independently-designed graduate degree. The three phases include MAP 620:**Research**, MAP 640: **Practicum**, and MAP 681: **Thesis**. Students work with at least one faculty advisor in the Research and Practicum phases –and with a thesis committee at the completion of their MAP program-- to design and execute their semester-by-semester study plans (see p. 3 for Study Plan template).

The MAP provides students the opportunity to take responsibility for the structure and content of their own education. In the first phase, Research, the student under the guidance of at least one academic advisor acquaints him- or herself with the best that is being thought, discussed, said, or done in their chosen subject area. All students entering the MAP program are required to enroll in the 3-credit MAP 600 or graduate seminar, a course designed to provide a framework for their Research. In the Practicum phase, students articulate and demonstrate ways of learning in their selected field by developing and applying the understanding acquired in the Research phase. The final, or Thesis, phase asks the student to demonstrate competence and mastery of their chosen subject area in the form of an original contribution to the field. (MAP 681 (Thesis) includes a written component in all cases but may also result in the creation of other kinds of products such as performances, CDs, and/or video production.)

As mentioned above, all entering MAP students are required to take the **MAP 600** graduate seminar (3 credits). Concepts and issues covered include critical thinking, research development concepts, and other skills and resources related to self-directed learning models and methods. Students who need additional background in research methods, quantitative or qualitative methods, writing, or other advanced skills needed to complete the program may be advised to enroll in such courses or to develop the skills through independent study. Since the range of interests and skills of MAP students has proven to be broad and diverse, the graduate seminar concentrates on the development of the cohort and the critical analytical skills and abilities needed for successful graduate-level study.

Students enroll in the **MAP 620, 640, and/or 681** (Contract Learning) for 3-12 credits of directed study with an advisor for each semester they pursue self-directed learning. The credit is variable to allow the student to design the curriculum to meet the goals and objectives of the semester study plan. Each enrollment requires the student and his/her committee to develop specific goals, outcome measures, learning objectives, and evaluation methods for that semester. Enrollment also requires attendance at bi-monthly colloquia held on the APU campus, during which all registered MAP students gather. Students who, as part of their studies, participate in outside learning experiences (e.g. workshops, seminars, residencies, travel, and other events) still register for the MAP for that semester, incorporating these activities as part of their learning outcomes. Students are responsible for any added cost of the outside learning experiences even though they may be included in the learning objectives.

Other graduate course taken at Alaska Pacific University that are part of the study plan's required 36 credit hours are listed in the University catalog and course schedules. Students as part of the study plan may also be enrolled in graduate-level course work at another school. Prerequisite courses are not usually part of the 36-credit requirement. In addition, depending on the study plan, students may enroll in more than the 36-credit requirement in order to obtain additional learning experiences.

Students progress through the program and earn credit for each enrolled semester by the submission of packets of work to their advisor(s) approximately every 3 weeks. Packets may be mailed as electronic attachments and should include a) a cover letter addressing the packet's contents, b) a process paper discussing the student's progress with respect to the semester study plan's goals, and c) any formal products agreed to in the study plan such as annotations, literature reviews, research papers, original writing, and the like. Advisors then have one week in which to provide written response. Students are appraised of their progress at the end of the semester, in writing by means of narrative evaluations (see attached form) and by electronic, telephonic, and/or in-person conferences with their committee member(s) (the form is determined by the student and the advisor(s)) on a periodic basis throughout the course of the semester.

Expectations for MAP 620, 640, and 681 (Contract Learning):

One might expect a MAP student to read, annotate, and provide written discussion of at least 30 books (or their equivalent in journal articles) for each 12 credits earned and to spend approximately 40-45 hours in directed study or research for each credit earned. In other words, a study plan for a 12-credit directed study ought to represent approximately 40 – 50 hours a week, or 480 to 600 total hours for a twelve-week semester.

A student who is enrolled for less than 12 credits in any semester in the MAP is expected to produce work equivalent to the ratio of credits for which s/he is enrolled (i.e. a 6-credit study plan would be equivalent to half the work-load/time commitment described above).

While the program is designed around three phases, these may not evolve in exact sequence. (For example, a student may begin a Practicum (640) experience while still conducting Research (620).) Although students register by semester, progress through various phases in the program often extend from one semester to the next.

Advisors, Mentors/Specialists, and Committee Members:

Every MAP student works with at least one academic advisor per enrolled semester. Additionally, it is recommended that students form committees consisting of a principal advisor and another or others who have academic or other expertise in the area under study (including those whom one might consider a mentor or specialist). All work together to assist the student with resources, ideas, questions, and discussions, but the principal advisor's primary responsibility is to aid in the development of, and then to provide monitoring for, the study plan. The study plan should be a dynamic vehicle for moving the student toward his or her outcome; it should be revised as necessary and appropriate. At the end of each semester, all committee members turn in evaluative feedback to the principal advisor, who authors and submits the narrative evaluation which becomes part of the official student transcript.

Academic advisors are paid \$200 per student, per semester (\$100 per semester if the student is only enrolled for 3 credits). Additionally, advisors, mentors, and/or specialists are reimbursed the equivalent of \$100.00 per MAP credit that the student attains in a given semester.

**DIRECTED STUDY PLAN
MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM**

Name:
Area of Study:
Semester:
Phase: Research (620) / Practicum (640) / Thesis (681) Phase:
Credits:

Overall Educational Goals:

Learning Objectives:

Learning Activities/Methodology:

Outcomes or Products and their estimated dates of completion:

Evaluation Methods:

Preliminary Bibliography:

Signatures:

Student _____	Email:	Phone:	Date:
Advisor _____	Email :	Phone:	Date:
Mentor/Specialist: _____	Email:	Phone:	
MAP Director _____	(m2evans@alaskapacific.edu)	564-8337	Date:

**MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM
ALASKA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY
NARRATIVE TRANSCRIPT**

Semester:

Phase: (Graduate Seminar 600; Research 620; Practicum 640; Thesis 681)

Credits:

Student:

Topic of Study:

Advisor:

Signature:

Date:

Readings (or Sources)/Activities:

Products:

Evaluation:

Comments/Suggestions:

MAP Narrative Evaluation

Guidelines for Advisors

Please try to keep your evaluation to one page if possible. I suggest that you preface the evaluation with a one-sentence statement to the effect that “(Student Name) has completed this directed study (satisfactorily/with distinction/with great distinction).”

For **Readings (or Sources)/Activities**, please remark on both the quantity of research completed by the student and on the quality of the student’s written response to same. Please mention specific titles/sources that others with knowledge of the field would recognize as critical to the student’s course of study.

Products: Again, please quantify and qualify, with reference to specific work that the student produced. What do these products signify –individually? Collectively?

Evaluation

Comments/Suggestions: Please comment on the student’s learning agenda for upcoming study as well as on what you perceive to be the student’s strengths and weaknesses with respect to this course of study.