

University of Alaska Board of Regents

Program Approval Summary Form

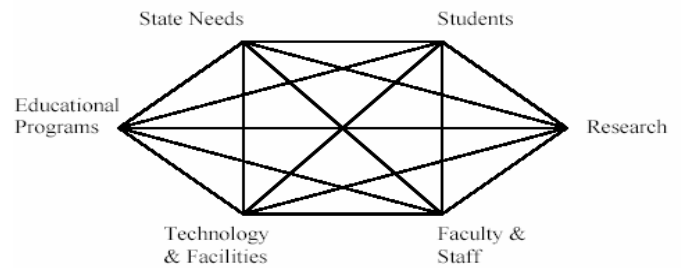
Requirements:

1. 2 pages or less
2. Must be a stand-alone document

MAU: UAF/Tanana Valley Campus (TVC)

Title: Certificate in Automotive Technology

Target admission date: Fall semester 2006



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

The University of Alaska system has an expressed commitment to providing workforce development, vocational and occupational instruction, and programs specifically designed to be responsive to the needs of local communities and to adult learners in particular (UA Strategic Plan 2009). The UA and UAF strategic plans both speak about responsiveness to job training and workforce development needs in the state.

Automotive Technology is not new at UAF and TVC. This proposal for a new certificate simply repackages those offerings which are now found as a concentration under the Maintenance Technology AAS. Doing so allows us to expand enrollments and successful graduates through improved curriculum, expanded marketing, increased program visibility, and greater community support.

Importantly this new UAF certificate will improve articulation between the UAF, UAA, and UAS programs so that students can move easily between programs if desired (this proposal was developed with active support from faculty in other MAUs). This proposal was developed through active consultation with automotive industry employers in the Fairbanks area. They have endorsed these changes and expressed a willingness to expand their support for program students.

What **State Needs** are met by this program?

Alaska's construction, oil and gas, mining, and related industries—all critical to Alaska's resource-based economy—need skilled workers and technicians to operate and maintain fleets of automobiles, trucks, and heavy equipment. The same is true for the tourism and hospitality sector, which maintains fleets of tour buses and automobiles for rental markets. Alaska's climate is tough on private automobiles and trucks as well; service technicians are essential to repairing and maintaining these vehicles, tuning them to address emissions standards, and assisting in making Alaska's vehicles safe for both drivers and passengers.

Alaska faces a severe shortage of skilled automotive technicians in the coming years. The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development reports that workforce needs in this area are growing and that the existing workforce is 'graying'—over 40% of bus, truck, diesel, and heavy equipment repair personnel and operators are over 50 years of age.¹ A major conference on Alaska's workforce development needs in Kenai in April 2005 highlighted these concerns. Business, labor, and university participants alike expressed common concern about a coming 'perfect storm' where Alaska's resource

¹ *Alaska Economic Trends*, September 2004; Statewide Employment Forecast, p. 4.

development opportunities are expanding but in the end could be hampered by a lack of skilled technicians, operators, and other workers.

Transportation and construction have been on the Alaska Workforce Investment Board's short list of high-need "job clusters" since at least 2003 due to their growth potential (see *Commonwealth North* report "Alaska's Jobs for Alaska's people," June 2003, p. 5). In the Fairbanks area, employers and community leaders have confirmed these high-demand, high-growth trends in three advisory committee meetings held in the past year.

What are the **Student** opportunities and outcomes? Enrollment projections?

In October 2005, TVC received a \$1.99M federal grant to expand offerings in automotive technology and other program areas. The basis of this enhanced funding is a model of fulltime enrollment in job training over a 9-12 month period—a model that expedites opportunities for students to move into gainful employment. This proposed Certificate of Automotive Technology is key to implementation of this new opportunity for students.

We expect to enroll a minimum of 15 students each year in this program and to produce at least 75 new automotive technicians in the coming five years.

Describe **Research** opportunities:

This proposal is part of a broader redesign of TVC's Automotive Technology program that will expand collaboration between the university and the automotive industry. Representatives of industry believe that expanding the program in this manner will open up opportunities for having top-quality factory training in university facilities that will benefit students, faculty, and community.

Describe Fiscal Plan for development and implementation:

TVC's FY06 budget contains approximately \$75K for the automotive program, including salary and benefits for one FTE faculty member plus support for adjuncts. We expect this to continue into the future.

New grant funding from the US DOL "President's Community-Based Job Training Grant" program provides approximately \$150K annually for enhancements to the program. This includes up to \$100K for each of three years (FY06-09) for leased shop space (approx. 8100 sq.ft. of shop, classroom, office, and storage. It also includes additional funding for adjunct faculty plus tools and other commodities.