

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW SELF-STUDY CRITERIA

Associates of Arts in Dine Studies

A. Executive Summary

The executive summary provides a high-level overview of the program: history, mission, goals, alignment to the institution, student and community demand, and a data summary of student enrollment, faculty, graduation rate, retention trend and time to completion.

- Please provide a brief description on the history of the degree program including when it was first created, who were the key parties involved in its creation, and why it was initially introduced to Diné College.

The AA Degree in Dine Studies came to fruition in the late 1980s with key involvement by Navajo Studies faculty under the leadership of the late and former College President, Dean C. Jackson. During the early years after, these courses were used to fulfill general education requirement, but by 1992, Associate of arts in Navajo Culture, Navajo Language, and bilingual-Bicultural Specialist were being offered. The Center for Din4 studies was established in 1993, and in the 2014-2015 academic year the Associate of Arts in Navajo Language and Associate of Arts in Din4 Studies was combined into a single degree. The program is considered the main stalk of the Din4 College.

- Briefly describe the program's mission/goals and how it aligns with the institution's mission, the institution's strategic goals and educational philosophy.

Program Mission

Nihizaad Bee Nihee Ó'ool'ijł Náás Yiilyéél. Our Language Maintains Our Way of Life Program Purpose

Ółta'í ádił nidljigo dóó t'áá bí át'éego bee nidínóotjłígíí hazhó'ó ałkéé' sinilgo yinahjį' Naayéé'ee'ehgo dóó Hózhóójk'éhgo Na'nitin ádiłh yidoolyéél.

The purpose of the Diné Studies is to sustain basic principles of Diné knowledge.

The program prepares students to pursue a baccalaureate degree in Southwest Studies, American Indian Studies, Indigenous Studies, anthropology, and related field.

Program Goals

The program aims to prepare students to develop and internalize lifelong skills for self-direction, personal motivation, and self-respect through Diné Protection Way and Blessing Way Teachings.

- Please provide a brief description on the purpose of the degree program such as meeting the needs of the community, the Navajo Nation, or the student demands for the program.

The purpose of the Din4 Studies program is to provide basic principles and information in the major areas of Din4 knowledge and Din4 language. This program will prepare students to pursue a baccalaureate degree in American Indian Studies, Anthropology, or related field. The Navajo Nation and society at large expressed their desires to reclaim culture and revitalize the language for the future generation of Navajo people.

- Provide an overview of the programs full-time and part-time enrollment, number of degrees awarded, full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, graduation rate, retention rate, and time to completion rate over the last four academic years.

During the years 2020-2023, part-time students dominated the enrollment count over full-time students. This trend suggests that our current student population is not fully investing in the reclamation and revitalization of Din4 philosophy of education. To offset this trend, more aggressive recruitment is necessary for buy-in.

Table 1: Overview Data Summary

Overview – Fall Only	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Undergraduate Headcount	34	32	32	40
Total Student Full-time Enrollment	16	13	14	16
Total Student Part-time Enrollment	18	19	18	24
Total Students that graduated (fall & spring)	0	1	0	2
Cohorts: The data shown here are cohorts by term.	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
# of students in cohort (FTF & NT)				
Persistence Trend (fall to spring)	44%	20%	43%	67%
Retention Trend	33%	0%	14%	67%
Graduation Trend				
Following a Cohort of students from 2018 over the course of six years, ALL programs at the institution have a 7% chance of students declaring a major and graduating with the major.				

B. Self-Study Summary

Short description of what academic years the review covers, names of individuals contributing to the APR. Indicate when the last time this program was reviewed and what has changed since the last APR.

The APR self-study covers the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2024.

The following individuals contributed to the preparation of the academic program review:

Michelle Whitstone, Instructor, Program Lead, and Academic Chair

Thomas Littleben, Instructor and Program Lead

Roger Benally, Professor

Dr. Avery Denny, Professor

Lorenzo Max, Associate Professor

Annette Lang, Administrative Assistant

David P. Nez, Dean of SDS&E

The last time this program was reviewed was 2017. Since then, the assessment format has changed, a large turnover of faculty, and the pandemic caused migration to distance education. Face-to-Face instruction has proven to be more successful in student learning and retention of knowledge versus online instruction.

C. Degree Program Overview

In the Degree Program Description of the Self-Study Report, Schools will provide information pertaining to the degree program curriculum, Diné Identity and Program Uniqueness, instruction delivery methods (modality and locations), program faculty and aspects of student learning.

C.1. Curriculum

- Please provide a comprehensive description of the curricula for the degree program including a list of required courses, general education courses, and electives, as well as an analysis of course progression and academic rigor. Include how and where the courses are offered, and a review of course prefixes, course prerequisites, course descriptions and credit hours as listed in the catalog.

Curricula explore the role of relationship and accountability in curriculum to benefit the learning community and expands into Indigenous ways of being and knowing. Curricula incorporate self-identity, self-awareness, and global awareness in the validation of knowledge acquisition. The curricula rebuild indigenous communities utilizing western tools.

The general education courses specific to Dine philosophy and identity consist of Foundations of Navajo culture, Navajo History, and one Navajo language course totaling 9-10 credits offered during the freshman year.

Program requirements entail Reading and writing Navajo language with emphasis on grammatical structure; Dine Oral history and cosmology with an emphasis on ceremonial practices and world creation narratives; A study of indigenous groups in the United States and Canada; a study of the evolution of the Navajo Nation government since the 1020s.

Students can choose between two emphasis, Navajo Language or Navajo Indian Studies. The Navajo emphasis Navajo medical terminology translations; Navajo Public Speaking course that prepares them to deliver well-organized speeches; and Research Methods introduces them to qualitative and quantitative research methods used in Psychology and Social Sciences.

The Navajo and Indian Studies empathizes Contemporary Indian affairs and Tribal government that provides an overview of federal Indian policies and programs since 1776; Navajo Oral Tradition and styles examine Dine philosophy and Navajo thought through the study of styles and traditions; and Research Methods.

These courses are offered at Tsaile, Crownpoint, Shiprock, Tuba City, and Window Rock campuses. The courses are delivered via a face-to-face method of instruction which at times requires blended courses based on student needs.

2024 - 2025 Advisement Checklist									
Associate of Arts Degree									
Dine Studies (67 - 68 credits)					STUDENT:		ID #:		
					ADVISOR:		DATE:		
Course No & Title		Credit	Transfer	Grade	Course No & Title		Credit	Transfer	Grade
GENERAL EDUCATION CORE REQUIREMENTS					PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS				
COMMUNICATIONS (6 hrs)					NAV 212 Navajo Literacy and Grammar II		3.0		
ENG 101 College Composition I		3.0			NIS 220 Navajo Oral History		3.0		
ENG 102 College Composition II		3.0			NIS 225/ANT 225 Indians of the U.S & North America		3.0		
HUMANITIES/FINE ARTS (6 hrs)					NIS 226/POS 226 Navajo Nation Government		3.0		
								Prog Credits: (12 hrs)	
Student must choose two courses with different prefixes from:					EMPHASIS: Must take a total of 3 courses from one the following emphasis list for a total of 10 credits. Courses used to fulfill electives below may NOT be used to fulfill General Education or Dine Studies Core Program Requirements. Do not select courses from the Emphasis, and mix or choose from either emphasis.				
ARH 110; ARH 211; ARH 213; ARH 214; CW 208; ENG 231; ENG 233;									
ENG 234; ENG 236; ENG 238; ENG 241; FA 106; FA 107; FA 112; FA 115;									
FA 120; FA 121; FA 131; FA 178; FA 181; FA 182; HUM 105; HUM 131;									
HUM 151; HUM 152; HUM 221; HUM 250; LIB 110; THR 101, THR 102									
		3.0			Navajo Language (NAV) course(s): NAV 231 Medical Terminology of the Navajo 3.0 NAV 240 Navajo Public Speaking 3.0 PSY 290/SWO 290 Research Methods 4.0 (10 hrs)				
		3.0							
MATHEMATICS (3.0 or 4.0 hrs based on major)					OR Navajo and Indian Studies (NIS) course(s) NIS 222 Contemporary Indian Affairs & Tribal Gov't 3.0 NIS 261 Navajo Oral Tradition and Styles 3.0 PSY 290/SWO 290 Research Methods 4.0 (10 hrs)				
MTH 110 College Algebra		4.0							
NAVAJO STUDIES (9-10 hrs)					OR Navajo and Indian Studies (NIS) course(s) NIS 222 Contemporary Indian Affairs & Tribal Gov't 3.0 NIS 261 Navajo Oral Tradition and Styles 3.0 PSY 290/SWO 290 Research Methods 4.0 (10 hrs)				
One NAV course, determined by placement test									
NAV 101,102,201,202 or 211		3.0/4.0							
NIS 111 Foundation of Navajo Culture		3.0							
NIS 221 Navajo History to Present		3.0			INCLUDE ELECTIVES Navajo Cultural Arts (NCA) Course(s): No more than 2 courses from: NCA 101; NCA 103; NCA 105; NCA 107; NCA 108; NCA 201; NCA 203; NCA 205; NCA 206; NCA 207; NCA 208 3.0 3.0 (6 hrs)				
LABORATORY SCIENCE (8 hrs)									
Choose one Life Science with lab: BIO 100; BIO 160; BIO 181; BIO 182; and one Physical Science with lab: CHM 130; CHM 151; ENV 101; GLG 101; PHS 110; PHY 101; PHY 110									
BIO		4.0							
		4.0			Prog Credits: (28 hrs)				
SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES (6 hrs) 1 HST plus 1 additional crs									
Choice of one: HST 101; 102; 135; 136;									
ANT 111; ANT 112; ANT 160; ANT 210; ANT 250; ECO 111; ECO 200;									
ECO 201; NAS 111; NAS 200; NAS 250; POS 111; POS 170; PSY 111;									

PSY 240; SOC 111; SOC 215; SOC 230; SSC 110				Advisor
HST	3.0			Signature: _____
	3.0			Date
Gen Ed Credits: (39-40 hrs)				Signed: _____
				FINAL:
				040324
MUST pass all above courses with "C" grade or better				

- Include the programs pathways to transfer internally/externally or directly into a career. Students transferring from other institutions or transferring to other institutions are provided a path by ensuring course prefixes and course content are aligned between transferring institutions and is accomplished through AZTransfer in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education.

C.2. Diné Identity and Program Uniqueness

- Provide a summary of how the Diné language is incorporated within the program curriculum. The school follows the conceptual idea that language and culture are closely associated; language in culture; culture in language¹. Witherspoon argues that culture and language do not exist in isolation from each other. They influence each other and are highly and extensively interlinked.

Diné language is the core instruction in both the Navajo language track and the Diné Studies (culture) track.

- Provide a summary of how Diné history and culture are infused within content of the program curriculum.

Diné history includes a time when the Navajo universe was designed by the holy beings in ancient history. This history outlines the development of the language and culture as it evolved through time and space. These stories of evolution and migration are embedded in the course design within the curricula.

C.3. Instruction Method

- Schools should describe the instructional delivery methods used and whether the program is an interdisciplinary program. If so, then identify which other Schools are included. In addition, it should be noted whether this degree program, in its entirety can be completed online or at an external campus.

The school of thought and culture of learning determined that Navajo language and Navajo culture courses are best taught in a face-to-face environment in alignment with how Diné philosophy of education was carried out by our ancestors. This modality was interrupted by the Covid 19 Pandemic. Institutional leadership began to mandate face-to-face instruction and instructors' physical presence on campus. Currently, the program provides for varied modes of instructional delivery based on student needs. Courses are offered in varied formats, some are F2F, and some are asynchronous and synchronous zoom via Canvas LMS. This strategy ensures accessibility of a varied student population. Some courses are offered at external campuses in a f2f format and blended format.

¹ Witherspoon, Gary, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Jan. 1980)

The AA program is interdisciplinary as it relates to all aspects of Din4 life including social studies, agriculture, environmental science, math, arts & humanities, and psychology.

- Analysis of modality and student success. Schools should evaluate modalities and location of their courses and entire program. How many faculty are credentialed to teach online courses.

To meet the needs of a varied student population, the program provides combinations of face-to-face and online instruction, and in order to carry out these modes of instruction, faculty were highly encouraged to seek Quality Matters certification. In this program, one faculty is credentialed to teach online and two are actively taking certification courses.

C.4. Student Learning

- Please provide a brief summary of your program's student learning outcomes, assessment methods used to measure PSLOs and reason for selecting courses and artifacts. Include your program assessment report.

PSLO 1 Student will express K'4 relationship through written and oral communication.:

PSLO 2: Student will explain the importance of Din4 self-awareness.

D. Program Faculty Profile

This section of the review analyzes the programs faculty and provides an overview of faculty characteristics over a four-year period.

D.1. Faculty Profile over a four-year period.

Table 2: Overview of Program Faculty

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total Program Faculty/Instructors	4	7	9	8
Full-Time Faculty	4	7	9	8
Education (PhD, MA, BA)	7 MA	7 MA	9 MA	8 MA
Rank	2 Assoc Prof 2 Professors 4 Instructors	2 Assoc Prof 2 Professors 4 Instructors	1 Assoc Prof 2 Professors 6 Instructors	1 Assoc Prof 2 Professors 5 Instructors
Adjunct Faculty	3	3	3	3
Education (PhD, MA, BA)	2 PHD 1 Ma	2 PHD 1 Ma	2 PHD 1 Ma	2 PHD 1 Ma
Rank	2 Assoc Prof 1 Instructor	2 Assoc Prof 1 Instructor	2 Assoc Prof 1 Instructor	2 Assoc Prof 1 Instructor
Gender (Female/Male)	1/3	1/6	2/7	2/6
Race/Ethnic (Native/Non-Native)	7/0	10/0	12/0	11/0
Salary Range	\$48,000- \$65,000	\$48,000- \$65,000	\$52,000- \$65,000	\$52,000- \$65,000

D.2. Average Student/Faculty Ratio over a four-year period.

This section of the review shows the student to faculty ratio over a four-year period.

Table 3: Overview of Student to Faculty Ratio

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Average Student to Faculty Ratio	10:1	8:1	7:1	10:1

D.4. Full-time Faculty Management

- Describe full-time faculty support for college programs. How are full-time faculty mentored and supported? How is teaching performance of full-time faculty reviewed and how does the School respond to problems that are identified?

Full-time faculty support college programs by providing instructions, developing curricular activities, course content, student advising, recruitment, and retention. Faculty are monitored through course assessment and outcomes, student surveys, and faculty performance evaluations that identify areas of improvement and a corrective action plan.

D.5. Part-time Faculty Contribution and Evaluation

- How do the part-time faculty members contribute (may also include non-teaching) to the program? How are the part-time faculty evaluated?

Part-time faculty contribute to the success in courses that require independent study and fill-in upon need on other occasions when full-time become overloaded. The only evaluations part-time faculty undergo each semester is the student surveys.

D.6. Reflection

- Overall, after reviewing various aspects of the faculty, what are the key findings? What are the strengths and opportunities to improve this area?

In review, faculty are underpaid and at times overloaded. They also need professional development to hone their skills in implementing best practices in instructional delivery and student learning. The faculty are knowledgeable and experienced in the teaching field. However, they require improvements in retaining students and being student focused. Faculty have opportunities to conduct research and publish materials.

E. Student Profile

This section of the review analyzes students of the program.

E.1. Student demographics over four-year period.

Table 4: Overview of Student Profile

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Full-Time & Part-Time Students – unduplicated, includes fall, spring and summer terms	59	49	63	57
First Time First Year Enrollees	4	3	7	3
Transfer Students	5	3	13	3
Pell Grant Recipient – at least one term	37	23	34	37
Gender = F/M	37/22	33/16	33/30	34/23
Race/Ethnic = Native/Non-Native	57/2	49/0	63/0	57/0
Age Range:				
13-17	0	0	0	0
18-21	12	6	16	14
22-24	6	5	7	7
25-34	21	18	17	9
35-49	10	11	10	15
50 & Older	10	9	13	12

E.2. Student by Chapter affiliation – Top 5 over a 4-year period

Table 5: Overview of Student by Chapter

Chapter	Total # of students enrolled
Shiprock	18
NULL	13
Rock Point	7
Chinle	7
Lukachukai	6

F. Student Engagement and Learning Opportunities

F.1. Community Engagement

- Are there any community engagement activities between high schools, business communities, and community organizations with the department? How does the College support such community engagement activities for the students in this program?
Faculty, staff and students of Center for Din4 Studies make numerous contributions to local communities, local schools, and the Navajo Nation at large. The program is consistently requested to provide guidance to internal and external entities about Din4 philosophy about current events, world events, language interpretations among other things. For example, during the recent solar eclipse, faculty provided a PowerPoint Presentation about the sacredness of it and the respect it demands.

F.2. High Impact Practices

- Identify the high impact practices that are incorporated into this program and its courses. High Impact practices refer to teaching and learning practices that have been shown to be beneficial for college students for student engagement and retention. High Impact practices may include experiences such as First Year Seminars, Writing Intensive Courses, Undergraduate Research, e-portfolios, Emphasis on Diversity/Global Learning, Service Learning, Community-Based Learning, Internships, Capstone Courses and Projects.
An introductory course on the Foundation Navajo of Culture and Navajo history properly orientates and prepares students to be successful at the interdisciplinary level. The first, second, third and fourth level Navajo language immersion is a practice that positively impacts the acquisition of knowledge and retention.

F.3. Co-curricular

i. Library Services

- How well does the Library meet the needs of the program? Describe the adequacy of the Library's holdings (e.g. databases, journals, books, and audiovisual materials). How do the collaborative information literacy instruction and reference/research assistance programs support the program being reviewed?
The library serves as reference sources for learning (reading) and research resources for students and faculty. The library contains special collections, publications, books for all occasions and adequate to serve that purpose.

ii. Student Success Services

- How well does student success services meet the needs of the program?
Student success is key to Din4 studies program. They become the first point of contact in their academic endeavors, advising, retention and transfers. They take care of the students' needs in the areas of wellness, mental health, and recreational outlets.

F.4. Course Satisfaction

- How satisfied are students with courses being offered? Provide summarized course evaluations. How has the department responded to issues raised to course satisfaction concerns via quantitative and qualitative assessments?

The data required to provide a summary of student satisfaction with course offerings is not readily available. However, over the years, students have expressed dissatisfaction with course offerings which causes delays or offsets in their pathway progression. In response, the program offers courses based on cohort progression and student needs.

F.5. Graduation Survey

- Summarize student responses in regards to career readiness, program satisfaction, services received and preparedness for transfer to another four-year institution.

There is no data available to summarize these responses.

G. Resources

G.1. Facilities

- Please describe the facilities that are used or associated with the degree program including but not limited to: number of classrooms, science labs, office space, faculty office space, and digital databases for academic use, computer labs, conference rooms, and other equipment. Please also indicate whether the School financially and physically maintains these specific resources.

Program courses are taught in classrooms in the NHC, mainly on the fifth floor which also houses the majority faculty and staff office spaces, Classroom facilities and faculty offices are also provided at Shiprock, Crownpoint, Window Rock, and Tuba city. Computer labs are limited at all spaces. These spaces are financially supported by the respective campuses. The program needs more classrooms.

G.2. Operating Budget

- Provide a summary of the costs associated with the degree program. Indicate whether the cost to fund this program has increased over the years.

See the attached operating budget form.

- This is not a financial audit, so in-depth descriptions of financial expenditures is not required. For example, indicate on average how much is spent annually on total faculty salaries, or operating costs, or co-curricular activities. DO NOT PROVIDE A DETAILED EXPENDITURE LIST.

On average, the program spends around \$450,280 annually.

H. Review

Provide a brief reflection of all areas of criteria and indicate areas of improvement.

In retrospect, the program found itself to need improvement in the instructional methodology, improvement in the instructor-to-student ratio, improvement in student learning outcomes, student enrollment and recruitment, student and community engagement, student courses satisfaction, facilities to support growth in the program, budget and salary equity for faculty and staff.

I. Results of the Site Visit

Attach/include the Site Visit Day Agenda and the APR Evaluation Team Documents.

J. External Reviewer – Feedback and Response

Provide details of the external reviewer's feedback. Please summarize the suggestions and recommendations put forth by the External Reviewer.

***I and J are NOT part of the self-study, but included in the APR Final Report.