

Our journey with Quality Matters

11/27/18 BY JOANNE HEALY & JANENE MCMAHAN

In February of 2016 Janene McMahan began her journey with Quality Matters. Every instructional designer at UAF was tasked with completing the course Applying the Quality Matters Rubric. By May, eCampus was contacting instructors, letting them know that UAF was now a Quality Matters (QM) institution; we were ready to apply the nationally recognized set of standards to a faculty member's online course.



Interested faculty were paired up with instructional designers. Flash forward to July 26, 2018: Joanne Healy successfully achieved recognition for UAF's School of Education after the Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Special Education program became the first online special

education program in the nation to earn the [Quality Matters' Online Program Design Certification](#).

Healy personally reviewed 15 courses to make sure materials were up-to-date, to ensure that assessments met and aligned with stated objectives, and in the case of Special Education, for accreditation, the objectives must meet the Initial Special Education Teaching Standards for the Council of Exceptional Children. Healy made sure that the objectives met the International Society for Technology in Education standards. Each course in the Special Education program underwent an internal QM review to prepare for the paid external review. External reviews require an 85% pass rate including meeting required standards to obtain QM course certification.

The process required extreme attention to detail and involved support from numerous instructional designers. Each course Healy reviewed inspired her to update portions for her students. When she found an item to update, alter, streamline or make more accessible she applied that knowledge to every course. By the time McMahan and Healy reached the last few courses most everything that would need adjusting was already done.

UAF's School of Education has the special education master's program to ensure UAF teacher candidates are prepared to meet the needs of Alaska's children. Because this is a fully

online degree program UAF is also able to serve and impact the needs of students throughout the United States.

THE STORY CONTINUES

UAF has 22 QM-certified courses. Healy's determination and success is inspirational. During her review of every special education course in the master's program, Tim Stickel, eCampus Student Services Manager, spearheaded the process of achieving QM Program Review Certification for Learner Support. UAF eCampus is excited to announce we are the fourth institution to earn this national certification since its inception. What does that mean? All learners in the online programs offered through UAF eCampus receive an externally recognized high quality of support.



BE PART OF THE NEXT CHAPTER

We'd love to hear from you if you want to learn more. Your options include:

- talking with an instructional designer about the Quality Matters process
- getting a free account and performing your own self-guided review
- going through an informal review with an instructional designer
- prepping your course and requesting eCampus submit it for a formal review*
- becoming a nationally recognized certified peer reviewer

*There is a fee involved for each formal review. At present, UAF eCampus covers this fee. Drop us a note [via this Google form](#) to have a personalized plan developed and to meet with an instructional designer.