

Biology MA  
Assessment Plan Summary

Biology MA

Develop MA Curriculum

Goal Description:

The graduate faculty will revisit the MA, define goals, establish targets, and develop a curriculum for this degree.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Disseminating Critical Thinking

Learning Objective Description:

Students leaving the MA program will demonstrate an ability to disseminate critical thinking skills in a classroom setting.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Disseminating Critical Thinking

Indicator Description:

Students exiting the program will develop critical thinking curricula for a science classroom which will be evaluated by the MA committee composed of Biology faculty.

A committee to resurrect the MA program in biology is currently working on a rubric that will be used to evaluate student performance under this objective. Once completed this rubric will be posted with this objective.

Criterion Description:

The curriculum developed by the MA student will be graded by the committee using a faculty defined rubric. An approval score of 80% by the faculty committee will be use as a criterion for passing.

Findings Description:

A graduate committee has been established to begin working on a MA in applied biology. A curriculum has been tentatively developed. Our goal is to implement this program in FA17.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

MA design and implementation

Action Description:

The MA program was geared toward highschool science teachers/professionals that needed graduate hours for promotion, etc. Faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences lost interest in offering courses to these cohorts of students. The faculty discussed revising the curriculum for this program and a committee was created to work out the specifics of the new program. This committee will meet to discuss and develop the new curriculum for a this MA program. This program will be a non-thesis MA degree and the curriculum will be aimed at providing a students practical/applied skillsets in environmental biology. Once the curriculum is developed, new courses needed to offer the program will be created and submitted for university and coordinating board approval.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Mastering Critical Thinking

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the new MA curriculum designed to incorporate critical learning into science education.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Demonstrating Critical Thinking Skills

Indicator Description:

Students entering and exiting the MA program will take pre and post-test, respectively. These tests will examine critical thinking abilities and changes between tests will be used to gauge progress.

A committee to resurrect the MA program in biology is currently working on developing this assessment tool. Once completed this pre-test will be uploaded under this objective.

Criterion Description:

An average increase of 50% (pre to post-test) will be used as an acceptable level of understanding.

Findings Description:

A graduate committee has been established to begin working on a MA in applied biology. A curriculum has been tentatively developed. Our goal is to implement this program in FA17.

### **MA design and implementation**

#### **Action Description:**

The MA program was geared toward highschool science teachers/professionals that needed graduate hours for promotion, etc. Faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences lost interest in offering courses to these cohorts of students. The faculty discussed revising the curriculum for this program and a committee was created to work out the specifics of the new program. This committee will meet to discuss and develop the new curriculum for a this MA program. This program will be a non-thesis MA degree and the curriculum will be aimed at providing a students practical/applied skillsets in environmental biology. Once the curriculum is developed, new courses needed to offer the program will be created and submitted for university and coordinating board approval.

### **Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement**

#### **Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):**

The biology department will review the external review of the graduate program and discuss whether to reinvigorate the biology MA.

#### **Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:**

A graduate committee has been established to begin working on a MA in applied biology. A curriculum has been tentatively developed. Our goal is to implement this program in FA17.

### **Building a quality MA curriculum**

#### **Closing Summary:**

The MA program was geared toward high school science teachers/professionals that needed graduate hours for promotion, etc. Faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences lost interest in offering courses to these cohorts of students. The faculty discussed revising the curriculum for this program and a committee was created to work out the specifics of the new program. This committee will meet to discuss and develop the new curriculum for a this MA program. This program will be a non-thesis MA degree and the curriculum will be aimed at providing a students practical/applied skillsets in environmental biology. Once the curriculum is developed, new courses needed to offer the program will be created and submitted for university and coordinating board approval.

Once the new curriculum is developed and revamped program implemented, assessment of student learning objectives will be tracked. Continuous changes to curriculum and/or instruction will be incorporated to improve student assessment scores.