

Biology MS - Assessment Plan
Summary

Biology MS

Increase Knowledge Of Profession

Goal Description:

Students will gain knowledge of the profession by gaining experience in presenting at scientific conferences and through publication.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Students Knowledge Of Publication Process

Learning Objective Description:

Students will be evaluated on their knowledge about the publication process.
A test that examines the students knowledge of the profession will be admistered when the student enters graduate school. After they take a course on professional aspects of biology, they will retake the exam. Student progress will be evaluated to examin knowledge of the publication process, etc.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Exit Exam

Indicator Description:

Students will take an exit exam that asks specific questions about the publication process.

Criterion Description:

Scores will be compared to entrance exam. An increase in knowledge about the publication process will be an indicator of success.

Findings Description:

There are no findings to report on this KPI, because an exit exam has not been approved by the department and administered to an incoming and exiting cohort of students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Develop Assessment Exam

Action Description:

The graduate committee as charged by the Chair of Biology will develop an assessment exam designed to evaluate the students academic progress during the course of their MS degree. This exam will be administered at the beginning of the MS degree in the Professional Aspects class and will be re-administered following the completion of degree requirements. Moreover, chair will continue monitor publication rates for students graduating with an MS degree and report those findings to the department.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Publication Rate

Indicator Description:

Each student's publication record will be tracked throughout the MS degree.

Criterion Description:

The number of papers published following the MS graduation will be compared to number published when admitted into the program. An increase in publications over this time will indicate the student has learned about the process through direct experience.

Findings Description:

The graduating cohort for 2016 consisted of 7 students. Two of these students published during their MS degree, totaling 3 papers.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

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Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

The Department of Biological Sciences offers a course 'professional aspects' that introduces students to various professional aspects of the field, and faculty mentors are responsible for promoting the publication rates of students. The knowledge of the profession and the publication rate of each

graduate student cohort will be tracked over time. Student weaknesses will be identified from this exam and brought to the graduate committee. Changes to the professional aspects course will be made to help address student weaknesses, and strategies will be devised to promote publication success of our graduate students.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

The graduate committee is developing an exam/questionnaire for the first year MS students. They will finalize this exam and seek departmental approval. Once approved, the exam will be administered to the incoming class and compared upon graduation.

Evaluating Student Skills and Publication Rates

Closing Summary:

The results from the exit exam and the publication activities of students will be presented to the Biology faculty. The faculty will discuss the outcomes of these results and develop goals for student achievement. If the faculty decide that student performance needs to be enhanced, they will develop a strategy for achieving these goals.