PhD Biology Outcome Set

Outcome 1: Knowledge

Demonstrate broad knowledge of student's field of study.

Measure

1. Written Comprehensive Exam

PROGRAM LEVEL: DIRECT - EXAM

Details/Description:
After completion of the required core courses, students complete a written comprehensive exam that is designed to evaluate their understanding of biological concepts. Students are asked to respond to three different questions. This exam also includes the student's proposal for dissertation research.

Acceptable Target:
All students receive ratings of meets or exceeds expectations on at least two of the three content questions.

Ideal Target:
All students receive ratings of meets or exceeds expectations on all of the three content questions.

Implementation Plan (timeline):
The evaluation rubric URL is sent to graduate committee members when a student's responses are distributed. Committee members are to complete their evaluation rubrics within two weeks of receipt of a student's responses.

Key/Responsible Personnel:
Written responses are submitted to the Graduate Coordinator, who distributes the responses and rubric URL to graduate committee members.

Supporting Attachments:

Supporting Attachments: Biology PhD Written Comprehensive Exam Evaluation (Web Link)
https://w.taskstream.com/SurveyLink/uiffd9ebf6e0/b2ca831e

Findings

for 1. Written Comprehensive Exam
Summary of Findings:
In 2016-17, 10 students completed written comprehensive exams. Of those, 8 received ratings of "meets expectations" on all of the content-related exam items, 1 received ratings of "meets expectations" on one content-related exam items and "exceeds expectations" on the other two content-related items, 1 received ratings of "meets expectations" on two content-related exam items and some "unacceptable" ratings on the other content-related item.

Acceptable Target Achievement:
Met

Ideal Target Achievement:
Moving Away

Recommendations:

Reflections/Notes:
The one student who was rated "unacceptable" on one exam item was advised to focus on this area in preparation for the Oral Comprehensive Exam. That performance was significantly improved, earning a "meets expectations" rating.

Substantiating Evidence:
Biology PhD Assessment Report (Adobe Acrobat Document)

Action
in 2016-2017 Assessment Cycle - Changes in Response to Findings

No Action Needed

No Status Added to No Action Needed

Action details:
Based on 2016-17 findings, no program changes are needed to support Outcome #1, Content Knowledge.

Implementation
Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Priority:

Supporting Attachments:
2. Oral Comprehensive Exam

PROGRAM LEVEL; DIRECT - EXAM

Details/Description:
After students pass the written comprehensive exam, they are required to participate in an oral exam. After a brief presentation of their proposed dissertation research, they are asked questions related to both their proposed research and biology concepts.

Acceptable Target:
All students receive a rating of at least "meets expectations" for their biology knowledge.

Ideal Target:
All students receive a rating of "exceeds expectations" for their biology knowledge.

Implementation Plan (timeline):
Graduate committee members complete the rubric at the conclusion of the oral comprehensive exam, within one week of the exam date.

Key/Responsible Personnel:
The Graduate Coordinator distributes the rubric URL to the graduate committee members after the oral exam.

Supporting Attachments:
Biology PhD Oral Comprehensive Exam Evaluation (Web Link)
https://w.taskstream.com/SurveyLink/ppzejjzezgzbz/bca034278

Findings
for 2. Oral Comprehensive Exam

Summary of Findings:
In 2016-17, 10 students completed oral comprehensive exams. Of those, 8 received ratings of "meets expectations" on their content understanding, 2 received some ratings of "exceeds expectations" on their content understanding, (See the Biology PhD Assessment Report attached to the first measure.)

Acceptable Target Achievement:
Met

Ideal Target Achievement:
Approaching

Recommendations:

Reflections/Notes:
One of the 8 students who received ratings of "meets expectations" was the student who received an "unacceptable" rating on one written-comprehensive exam response.

Substantiating Evidence:
**Action**

*in 2016-2017 Assessment Cycle - Changes in Response to Findings*

**No Action Needed**

**Action details:**
Based on 2016-17 findings, no program changes are needed to support Outcome #1, Content Knowledge.

**Implementation Plan (timeline):**

**Key/Responsible Personnel:**

**Measures:**

**Priority:**

**Supporting Attachments:**

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**Measure**

3. Student Exit Survey

**PROGRAM LEVEL; INDIRECT - SURVEY**

**Details/Description:**
Students are asked to self-assess their proficiency for each of the program's learning outcomes.

**Acceptable Target:**
All students indicate that they are at least "somewhat proficient" for each of the outcomes.

**Ideal Target:**
All students indicate that they are "highly proficient" for each of the outcomes.

**Implementation Plan (timeline):**
Students complete the exit survey as part of their RSVP for commencement each spring.

**Key/Responsible Personnel:**
The Graduate Coordinator makes sure that the Exit Survey URL is part of the commencement RSVP materials.

**Supporting Attachments:**

[Biology PhD Student Exit Survey](https://w.taskstream.com/SurveyLink/pgzizkzezgbzx/9b9c0d48)
Findings
for 3. Student Exit Survey

Summary of Findings:
In 2016-17, seven students completed the exit survey. Of those, 6 rated themselves as "somewhat proficient" in content knowledge, 1 rated themselves as "highly proficient" in content knowledge. (See the Biology PhD Assessment Report attached to the first measure.)

Acceptable Target Achievement:
Met

Ideal Target Achievement:
Approaching

Recommendations:

Reflections/Notes:

Substantiating Evidence:

Action
in 2016-2017 Assessment Cycle - Changes in Response to Findings

No Action Needed

Action details:
Based on 2016-17 findings, no program changes are needed to support Outcome #1, Content Knowledge.

Implementation
Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Priority:

Supporting Attachments: