

**Departmental Review Report
Department of Zoology
Weber State University
February 22-23, 2018**

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Reviewers**

The review team, composed of Dr. Jennifer Turley, Weber State University (WSU), Department of Athletic Training and Nutrition, and Dr. Erin O'Brien, Dixie State University, Department of Biological Sciences, performed a site visit of the WSU Zoology Department on February 23-24, 2018. During this visit, the team toured the facilities and met with Dean Dave Matty, Department Chair Chris Hoagstrom, Zoology faculty, staff and students to discuss all aspects of the Department.

recommendations
for the Department

and the functionality of the external advisory committee.
The review team recommends that the **Department** (1) faculty engage in more regular ~~facilities of adding enriched first~~ lab course content and skills taught, (2) look into the

Evaluation of Mission Statement

The effectiveness of the assessment process was based on:

- A. *The program has a developed set of measures for assessment that are clearly defined and appropriately applied.*
- B. *Each learning outcome is assessed with at least one direct measure of learning; thresholds for acceptable performance are defined (for each measure) and published.*
- C. *Demonstrate that evidence of learning is being gathered on a regular basis across the program, that the evidence is aggregated, and reported at the aggregate.*
- D. *Demonstrate that these measures are being used in a systematic manner on a regular basis and are reviewed against department-established thresholds, i.e., are the program faculty meeting regularly to discuss the evidence?*
- E. *Demonstrate that the assessment of the program mission and student outcomes is being used to improve and further develop the program. Is the evidence acted upon? Is it clear what drives program change?*

Evaluation of Effectiveness of the Assessment Process

- A. Adequate
- B. Adequate
- C. Concern
- D. Weakness
- E. Concern

Rating: Strength (S), Adequate (A), Concern (C), Weakness (W)

Comments: Although the program overall had evidence of meeting the program learning outcomes there was a lack of evidence that each of the required courses in the curriculum are being assessed routinely even when the same PLO is being assessed. The burden of assessment falls on faculty members who often lack help and feedback. The assessment process is not clearly defined and is not consistently applied. The assessment process is not clearly defined and is not consistently applied. The assessment process is not clearly defined and is not consistently applied.

proposing a department-wide assessment plan would help to jump start things. End of year department discussions regarding assessment data and appropriate changes to curricula if needed will help close the loop.

Standard D -Academic Advising

- A. *The program has a clearly defined strategy for advising their major/minor, or BIS students that is continually assessed for its effectiveness.*

Evaluation of Faculty

- A. Strength
- B. Strength
- C. Strength
- D. Adequate
- E. Concern
- F. Adequate
- G. Adequate
- H. Adequate

Rating: Strength (S), Adequate (A), Concern (C), Weakness (W)

Comments: All full-time faculty are highly qualified with superior credentials and reputations as outstanding educators, researchers, and mentors with solid research publication records. All have earned a Ph.D. (terminal degree for zoology) and are innovated educators and active in research and service. Of the seven adjunct faculty, 5 have terminal degrees and two have masters degrees. Adjunct faculty are hired on semester contracts by recommendation of the department chair. Zoology faculty members consistently have good to excellent student evaluations, ranging from 4 to 6 (out of 7) across criteria. The department chair follows WSU policy when establishing teaching loads and review of faculty members for tenure and rank advancement. Zoology faculty members contribute to advancement of life science through diverse faculty-directed research agendas and service in various student and community organizations and professional societies. Students reported that faculty are competent, available at convenient times, and provide effective instruction. Classroom and laboratory facilities support engaged and high impact practices.

Concerns: Several department faculty have release time for other appointments (department chair, associate dean, advisement, and other committee work). There is little diversity among faculty members but an equal gender split.

Comments: The Department of Zoology is housed in a state-of-the-art facility that supports excellent teaching, laboratory, research, office, and student community spaces. The department includes a full-time non-exempt staff member (Administrative Specialist) and a full-time exempt staff person (Laboratory Manager). The administrative specialist handles budgetary, class scheduling, and numerous other tasks associated with the department. The lab manager ensures that lab rooms are properly equipped and maintained, lab supplies are always on hand, live animals are properly cared for, and all classroom technology is maintained and properly serviced. The lab manager supervises several hourly employee students. Teaching Assistants (TAs) are used in a model where the students enroll in an upper division course and part of that course credit requires TA work in a lower division course (similar to an internship). Supplemental Instructors are employed for multiple challenging academic courses. The library offers adequate support for the department needs.

Concerns: The department is viewed as being understaffed in the areas of lab management and academic advisement. The college is viewed as being underrepresented in the institute's development office. There are also minor issues with the new facility that were the result of construction quirks and which may benefit from minor adjustments such as the drain in the floor of the anatomy prep room.

Recommendations: Funding to hire a shared life science academic advisor should be provided to the College of Science to ease the burden of advisement on facult-1(.)][(:)-2(F)1(5-1.1(so)1 -1.15htp(i)f1 Tw 0.(p)-

majors. The department has an external advisory committee that met once since the last program review. The department has yet to determine how an advisory committee can help guide curriculum efforts to assist the graduating students secure positions with a specific skill set to meet job demands. Perhaps this is because many students use their zoology degree as a pre-professional degree. The students and faculty in the department have a strong sense of community on and off campus. There is a strong emphasis on com

References

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