Student Learning Assessment Program

## Response to Summary Form

**Graduate Program 2019**

Department: Biological Sciences

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| **Category** | **Level[[1]](#footnote-1)\*** | Comments |
| Learning Objectives | Level 3, M.S. Biological Sciences | Objectives are the ones established by CGS. You may want to consider taking those basic objectives and re-writing them through the biology lens, so they are specific to your program. For example, what content are you teaching and want students to master? You could start with the required courses. Part Three elaborates on your content, but reading the objectives leaves one with little idea of what is taught and learned related to biology. |
| **How, Where, and When Assessed** | Level 2, M.S. Biological Sciences | You have a blend of direct and indirect measures here that appear to be collected at various points in the curriculum, so that’s good. Using the thesis and comprehensive exam are common measures for graduate programs because they offer rich artifacts to assess student learning outcomes. It appears that the rubric being used for oral defenses is working as well, and creating one for written work is a good idea. Could the thesis rubric be adapted slightly for other written work? When you list “graduate seminar” here, it seems to mean presentations and papers that are evaluated in this course, so the rubrics and other measures are the how part of this column that are implied, but not explicitly stated. You might want to add a question or two on the exit survey about any areas where the student feels she could have been better prepared or where there might be redundancy in the program. |
| **Expectations** | Level 2, M.S. Biological Sciences | Expectations are established for the measures listed. Again, grades can cover a multitude of skills, so it is hard to know what a course grade signifies about a specific objective although for program content it is probably telling. The comprehensive exam is also a good measure for content and the expectations here are rigorous and appropriate for graduate study. More specific expectations could be given for writing like you have for oral presentations. |
| **Results** | Level 3, M.S. Biological Sciences | Results are given for all measures. Do your exit surveys provide data on all your objectives? If so, you can include that data here. What are “positive reviews from faculty”? You may want to explain what objectives the faculty are evaluating, such as research skills, laboratory techniques, etc. Your students are presenting at conferences and publishing at tremendous rates! |
| **How Results Will be Used** | Level 3, M.S. Biological Sciences | Feedback loop appears to be in place with graduate coordinator and faculty sharing results and discussing data. Congratulations on the growth of your program! I have no doubt that the flexibility you allow the students draws people to your program. |

Next report: June 2021.

1. \* Levels should not be interpreted as grades or scores; they are stages of implementation based on patterns of characteristics described by North Central Association. These levels are approximations based on the information provided in the summaries. Please refer to the checklist for the Primary Traits listed for each level. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)