**NSU Assessment Form AY 2018-2019**

1. Program assessed: M.S. Natural Sciences

2. College: Graduate College and Gregg Wadley College of Science and Health Professions

3. Department: Department of Natural Sciences

4. Program (academic major) mission statement:

Northeastern State University strives to advance knowledge by exploring new possibilities through critical inquiry and intellectual freedom, and pursuing continuous improvement individually and as a community. The afore-mentioned value statements will be evident in the Master of Science in Natural Sciences program objectives by providing a platform for the acquisition and expansion of knowledge, and equipping the program beneficiaries with advanced skills for handling even greater challenges and opportunities in the community and society at large. The Master of Science in Natural Sciences program seeks to empower individuals to become socially responsible citizens by creating and sustaining a culture of learning and discovery within the Natural Sciences. A central goal of the program is to prepare students for doctoral programs and/or employment in the Natural Sciences or advancement in their current profession.

5. Name of the professional association or accrediting agency that informs the program’s student learning outcomes:

The MS in Natural Sciences is not under an accrediting agency. The objectives of the Master of Science program in the Natural Sciences are:

1. To increase both the depth and breadth of knowledge in the Natural Sciences for understanding and appreciation of the multidisciplinary nature of science.
2. To provide advanced training and education for expanding current scientific knowledge and skills.

6. This program:

\_\_\_is taught entirely online

X

\_\_\_is taught at least 50% by distance education

\_\_\_utilizes distance education\*, but this is less than 50% of the program

\_\_\_does not have any online courses

\_\_\_is available in multiple modalities, ie students can earn the degree entirely online, or blended, or face-to-face.

Course delivery includes ITV courses between the Broken Arrow and Tahlequah campus.

(\*Distance education is defined by the Higher Learning Commission as: **“**education that uses one or more of the technologies…to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously” https://www.hlcommission.org/Monitoring/distance-delivery.html)

**Term Definitions**:

1. **Program Student Learning Outcome** refers to the academic major’s identified student learning outcomes. These are the student learning outcomes that a student in the major is expected to achieve upon program completion.

2. **Degrees of Excellence (D.O.E.) Student Learning Outcome** refers to the institutional student learning outcomes. These are attached as an appendix to this report.

3. **Assessment Measure** refers to the assessment tool employed to determine whether the program student outcome was reached.

4. **Performance Target** refers to the desired result (or desired level of competency) for each program student learning outcome. It is the minimum level of competency indicating the program student learning outcome is met.

5. **Number of students** assessed refers to the number of students participating in the specific assessment measure for the student learning outcome.

6. **Results** refers to the data the measure produced, e.g. specific number of students meeting the performance target, number not meeting the target, etc. Report the findings from the assessment.

**Instructions**: Please complete the following for each program student learning outcome assessed. In the column for Degrees of Excellence (D.O.E.) Student Learning Outcome, please indicate the D.O.E. to which the program outcome best aligns.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Program Student Learning Outcome Assessed** | **Degrees of Excellence Student Learning Outcome** | **Assessment Measure** (include description of how the tool was administered) | **Performance Target** | **Number of students assessed** | **Results** |
| 1 | Expand the breadth of knowledge in basic science content within the student’s chosen field of emphasis. | 1, 3 | Review of course grades in required and elective courses. | 1. >70% students must maintain a 3.0 graduate GPA or higher.  2. >70% of students earn no more than one “C” in required and elective coursework. | 14 students | 1. 100% of the students surveyed have GPA > 3.0.  2. 92% of students have earned only grades of A and B in graduate coursework. |
| 2 | Generate new scientific knowledge within one’s field of emphasis. | 2, 4, 5 | Defense of M.S. thesis or capstone project. | The student’s graduate committee or capstone course instructor must endorse the student’s Thesis or Capstone. The Dean of the Graduate College must also approve the Thesis. | No students defended their thesis or capstone project. | N/A |
| 3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| 8 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Data Analysis of the assessment results.** Discuss the data points that stand out? Why? Are these results similar to past results, or do they point in a different direction? Are there indications that these results are coincidental or limited, or are they accurate measures of students' knowledge and skills? Do these results confirm or challenge faculty beliefs about what students know and are able to do? Are the faculty in agreement with one another about what the data suggest? What other data would inform this analysis?

**Learning Outcome 1:** All 14 students analyzed maintained an overall graduate GPA of >3.000 (average = 3.637 ± 0.278). Therefore, we assess this learning outcome as a 100% success rate for this academic year. Acceptable coursework in the M.S. Natural Sciences is defined as grades higher than C. 92% of students assessed have not earned a grade of C or lower. The program committee is in agreement that the cited criteria for success are passed for this learning outcome.

**Learning Outcome 2:**  No students attempted a thesis or capstone defense in 2018-19; therefore, this learning outcome is not evaluated.

**Plans for the Future**: Based on the analysis of the assessment data (how well students performed) and taking into consideration previous years’ assessment data, describe the action plan for the next year? What will program faculty start doing differently, stop doing all together, or continue to do in the same way?

The data presented indicates that the majority of students in our program are able to handle the rigors of graduate coursework at NSU. The primary challenges facing the program are increasing enrollment and increasing the graduation rate. The program committee will explore the feasibility of a graduate certificate option to increase the number of graduate students in the pipeline for this program. In addition, the program committee will work with current students to identify roadblocks to graduating and help students to resolve these difficulties. This includes targeted communication with graduate students in their penultimate semester, outreach to students that fail to defend in their desired semester, and dialog with faculty advisors.

Name of Person Completing Form: \_\_Chris Burba\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_12 September 2019\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: