**Learning Objectives and Assessment for the Biology Graduate Program**

We recognize that graduate students in the Biology program have a variety of professional goals; most students explore and make these goals explicit annually (beginning in year 2) in Individual Development Plans. Our general learning objectives and assessments are listed below, but these may vary according to the primary career aims of the student. Details on Biology program requirements, including the assessments listed below, are provided in the Biology Graduate Handbook, which is posted on the Biology Department website.

**Learning Objectives**

*For either a masters' or PhD degree, we expect students to:*

1) achieve fluency in the scholarly literature, compelling questions, and research methods in the student's primary field of research

2) acquire demonstrable and autonomous research skills, in field or laboratory, as befits specialty

3) learn to process and present scientific data in compelling, credible formats

*For a PhD, we also expect students to:*

4) gain experience and skills in pedagogy and teaching

5) develop and execute an original research project that would be judged credible by peers and has or will result in one or more peer-reviewed publications appropriate to the field of study

**Assessment**

*For either a masters' or PhD degree, we expect students to:*

1) have made substantial progress on a chosen research topic in the form of a body of new and credible data

2) present and defend that research publicly and in the form of a thesis, critically evaluated by faculty

*For a PhD, we also expect students to:*

3) pass three quarterly exams

4) pass a formal proposal exam by the end of their 2nd year

5) continue to make steady progress, as assessed by annual meetings with their Dissertation Advisory Committee

6) ultimately achieve sufficient progress that the project has or will result in one or more peer-reviewed publications appropriate to the field of study

In all cases, we will track job placement to assess whether students are following their desired career paths.