

Biology Department Assessment Plan 2017-2018

Last year the Biology Department engaged with institutional data around course completion and graduation rates, and directly assessed upper-level student learning outcomes in the area of molecular biology (2016-2017). At the annual Biology Department retreat (09/2017) there was call for directly assessing more general biology learning outcomes and doing so in a pre- post- design. A peer-reviewed, reliable and valid general biology assessment instrument is expected to be published shortly, allowing us to administer this instrument the 2018-2019 academic year. This instrument is directly aligned to our department's learning outcomes through the Vision and Change document that provides a nationally shared vision for undergraduate biology education (AAAS, 2011). To prepare for the implementation of this new instrument in 2018-2019, and to ensure that the collection, analysis and reporting of department assessment efforts is meaningful and useful in an ongoing manner, the 2017-2018 year will be used for assessment planning and coordination. We will undertake the following activities:

1. We will form an assessment committee with both career non-tenure track and tenure-track faculty.
2. The assessment committee will propose a plan for collecting, analyzing and reporting assessment data in a useful and ongoing way. This plan will be put before all the biology faculty for feedback and revision.
3. We will host a visit from a PULSE ambassador (<http://www.pulse-community.org/>) to guide department conversations about the alignment of our curriculum and assessment with Vision and Change (AAAS, 2011).
4. Subject to the revised assessment plan, in Fall 2018 instructors in both the honors and general biology sequence will plan to administer the forthcoming general biology assessment as a pre-test.

Reference

American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). (2011). Vision and change in undergraduate biology education: A call to action, final report. Washington DC.
<http://visionandchange.org/files/2013/11/aaas-VISchange-web1113.pdf>