

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary

Fisheries PhD Degree

SFOS

2013 and 2014

Submitted by: Fisheries Graduate Program Committee Chair Shannon Atkinson

Contact Information: skatkinson@alaska.edu 907-796-5453

Date: June 3, 2014

1. Assessment information collected

a. Results of student comprehensive exam (pass/fail). Goal = 80% success w/in three years of enrollment. MET GOAL

No failures of the comprehensive exam have been recorded during the last two academic years.

b. Student committee rates student and Grad Program Chair rates thesis after thesis defense. Goal = 80% of students will be judged by faculty and the program head to have performed at the level of a competent fisheries professional (score \leq 2). MET GOAL.

Revised OA procedures changed the committee evaluations from pass/fail to a score of 1-4, and added an evaluation of the thesis by the Graduate Program Chair. Scores are:

- 1 = strong compared to a typical professional
- 2 = competent compared to a typical professional
- 3 = needs improvement to meet professional standards
- 4 = seriously deficient

Committee evaluations for PhD students in AY 12-13 and 13-14 were: 5 students received an overall score of \leq 2.

Grad Chair overall evaluation of three dissertations scored 1 (for two students), 2 (for one student).

c. Students post-graduation employment. Goal = 80% have fisheries-related employment or in PhD program within one year. MET GOAL.

Nine of the last nine PhD graduates had fisheries-related employment post-graduation survey.

d. Advisor and students asked whether publications resulted from thesis. Goal = 75% of PhD students submit a manuscript to a journal within a year, 75% successfully publish a first-authored paper within three years.

Student publications: Based on the 2013 Associate Dean's publication list, publications including past and present students numbered 35.

e. Students rate program at exit and 3 years post-graduation. Goal = 80% satisfied or very satisfied. MET GOAL.

Exit interviews with 2012-2014 graduates: Seven exit interviews were conducted with PhD students, of which 4 answered the question “Overall, how satisfied are you with your educational and professional preparation from your degree program in Fisheries?”. Three students gave a “very satisfied” and one student said “satisfied”.

Survey of graduates: Due to 2 of our 3 administrative staff leaving the Fisheries Division and not being replaced, no surveys of former graduate students have been conducted in the last 2 years.

f. Miscellaneous statistics.

In Spring 2013, there were 34 PhD students officially enrolled. In Spring 2014, official enrollment was 32 PhD students. During the period Fall 2012-Spring 2014, 6 PhD students graduated. The PhD students had a mean time to graduation of 5.79 years, calculated from 47 students who have been in the program since 1988. During AY 2012-2014, PhD student credit hours totaled 1,189.

2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above

By our measures, the Fisheries PhD Program is very successful. It is producing students that are successful in obtaining fisheries-related employment, much of it in Alaska. The students are publishing the results of their theses in peer-reviewed scientific literature, indicating that their research is of high quality. Students are generally satisfied with the program, and at the end of their program the faculty are satisfied with the students and their dissertations.

The mean time to graduation is 5.8 years for a PhD, with one current student at >10 years, which is too long. The graduate chair is working with this student and his committee to complete his degree.

Improvements to data collection are needed: A higher fraction of students need exit interviews. Also, increased emphasis on the post-graduation surveys, needs to be continued. The Division Director, Grad Chair, and staff will clarify procedures and responsibilities for collecting, collating, and archiving OA data.

3. Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above

Curricular review for the PhD program is slated to be the major focus of the Graduate Program Committee in the 2014-2015 academic year. These data will be one of the principal bases of discussion.

4. Identify the faculty members involved in reaching the conclusions drawn above and agreeing upon the curricular changes resulting

The Fisheries Graduate Program Committee consists of Shannon Atkinson (chair), Courtney Carothers, (term ends June 2015), Franz Mueter (term ends June 2014), Milo Adkison (past chair), Jeff Falke (Term ends June 2016) and Ginny Eckert (term ends 2016). The Committee will review the outcomes data and suggests changes, but any changes are approved (and possibly modified) by the Fisheries faculty as a whole.