

# Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary

## ***Physics, BA<sup>2</sup> - Physics, BS<sup>2</sup> - Applied Physics, BS<sup>1</sup>***

*College of Natural Science and Mathematics*

**AY 2010-11 & 2011-12**

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### **1. Assessment information collected**

Questionnaire and request for written supplemental comments.

### **2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above**

During this round of SLOA there were five respondents to the surveys (as noted in the footnote annotations in the title block).

The undergraduate student responses were sharply in contrast with those of the graduate students in this SLOA round. The UGs were extremely positive in their assessment of the program(s). This was reflected in the written comments, as well.

One student would like to have seen larger UG class sizes, but all of the other students cited that as a strength in the program. This is somewhat ironic, in that small class sizes are the primary driver for program consolidation in the department.

The slightly negative comments (few below a neutral rating) were centered around classroom ergonomics, faculty involvement outside of classes, and textbook cost/effectiveness. One student felt that advising could be better tailored to the individual student, especially for course offerings outside the department. The overwhelming response was that the departmental faculty are competent and caring their instruction.

### **3. Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above**

Due to a lack of graduating numbers and a campus-wide program review, the department conceded to a reduction in the number of programs offered in the undergraduate degrees. Beginning in AY 2012-13, the department will offer a BS with optional concentrations in specialized areas.

Since there were so few respondents to the questionnaire (71% of the questionnaires were returned), it was decided as a department that a review of our SLOA program should be undertaken. This will be left to the guidance of the incoming chair (for AY2012-13). We have few enough students that a different approach is warranted to make meaningful changes to the curriculum based on student feedback.

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

The curricular changes were approved by a vote of the entire department, although the consent was not unanimous. Much of the discussion centered upon a market-based approach to the degrees, which have very similar course content, but are aimed at attracting various types of students. At the end of the debate, the department conceded that concentrations beginning in AY2012-13 under a generic Physics, BS banner were acceptable – again, not unanimously. It was the majority opinion that at the undergraduate level, the specific moniker attached to the degree was of less importance than at the graduate level, since those are effectively professional degrees.

The discussion of a SLOA committee and actions was begun at the close of AY2011-12 in department meetings, but not acted upon by a vote. The leading advocate for SLOA reform in the department will be on sabbatical for AY2012-13.