

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary

Wildlife Biology and Conservation, MS

College of Natural Science and Mathematics

AY2014-15 and 2015-16

Submitted by: Kris Hundertmark

Contact Information: 474-7159

Date: 13 May 2016

1. Assessment information collected

As assessment criteria we monitor the number of students in the program, the graduation rate, and the time to complete the degree. We also poll recent graduates to determine their success in finding employment in the field or going on to further graduate study. Finally, we monitor the number of thesis-related peer-reviewed publications and oral or poster presentations made at professional meetings. Those numbers refer to publications or presentations from the period covered by this report and therefore include recent graduates as well as those still matriculating.

We currently have 20 MS students in the program. We graduate approximately 5 students per year. Time to graduation for the period 2014-16 was 3.3 years (n=11); time to graduation for the period 2012-14 was 3.7 years (n=9).

Twenty-eight recent (2010-2016) MS graduates were contacted and asked about current employment; 22 responded. Of those responding, 21 gained employment in a position related to their degree (private industry, universities, government agencies) or were in PhD programs; 1 was unemployed (not looking for work). Of those with jobs, 14 were working in Alaska.

MS students within the program published 26 peer-reviewed journal articles and made 42 presentations at professional conferences during this period.

2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above

The number of MS students in the program continues to hold steady at about 20. Time to graduation improved from the previous period but sample sizes are small; nonetheless, the mean time to graduation is acceptable for an MS program where multiple data collection seasons are the norm.

In this field, a Master's degree is necessary to work as a biologist rather than as a technician, which is more suited to a BS graduate. Available data suggest that the rate at which our graduate students find work within their field of study or go on to further graduate study is high (95%), indicating that we are adequately

preparing students for the workplace and future employment. The number finding employment within Alaska is also high, indicating that our program is meeting Alaska's need for wildlife biologists in State and Federal conservation agencies, non-governmental conservation organizations, and private industry.

3. Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above

No curricular changes are deemed necessary.

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

Mark Lindberg, Greg Breed, Falk Huettmann, Patricia Doak, Todd Brinkman, Brad Griffith, Knut Kielland