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Memorandum

From: Christa Mulder
Department Chair, Biology & Wildlife

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JUL - 3 2012

Date: June 29, 2012

Dean's Office
College of Natural Science & Mathematics

Subject: Discontinuance of MAT in Biology

This memorandum is a formal request to discontinue the MAT in Biology. In a memorandum from the Provost, Susan Henrichs, dated June 26, 2012, I was informed that the Chancellor's Cabinet has decided that the degree program should be discontinued based on zero or very low enrollment. I concur with this decision.

The deletion of this program will have virtually no effect on other programs, personnel, students, or budget. There are currently no students enrolled in this program and therefore can be discontinued immediately and will not require a phase out period.

While a copy of the original program approval is not available, the following is an extract from the July 23, 2009 UAF Academic Program Review Committee (a committee formed within CNSM at that time). "The M.A.T. in Biology program is designed to offer a graduate degree to students who have a B.A. or B.S. in Biology and are interested in teaching biology in K-12 schools."

Further, the committee recommended the program be discontinued at that time:

"No students have been enrolled in this program since 2003 and only 3 students have been awarded this degree. Doug Schamel, who was very passionate about K-12 education but passed away a number of years ago, led this program. If there were potential students (K-12 teachers/interns) interested in this program and a faculty who were interested in leading it, then it would be a good program to keep in place. However, given the faculty resource allocation in DBW and the lack of interest, the committee recommends removing the program from the DBW even though it currently incurs no cost to the program."

As stated earlier, there are currently no students enrolled in the program; in fact, since the time of the assessment in 2009, there have been no students enrolled in the program.

Based on the decision of the Chancellor's Cabinet and the recommendation of the 2009 Program Review Committee, I request the MAT in Biology be discontinued immediately.

Governance


7/31/12 TLP

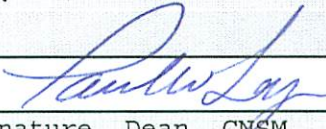
Diane Wagner

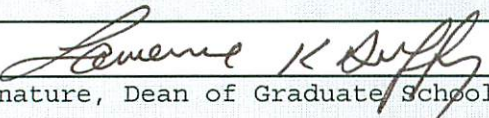
7/9/12 TLP

APPROVALS:


Signature, Chair, Department of Biology & Wildlife
Date July 3, 2012


Signature, Chair, CNSM Curriculum Council for:
Date 24 July 2012


Signature, Dean, CNSM
Date 7/26/12
CNSM


Signature, Dean of Graduate School
Date 7/30/12

Signature, President, UAF Faculty Senate
Date

Signature, Chancellor
Date

Signature, President
Date

Signature, Board of Regents
Date

2009 Program Review
Biological Sciences: Wildlife Biology
Ver 5.0

faculty are considering making the program more flexible to align better with student interests and schedules. Recent curriculum changes include:

- Expanded options for courses in policy and law,
- Increased options for lab or field courses,
- Changed program name to 'Wildlife Biology and Conservation' to better reflect the subject and future careers of majors.

Student responses to a survey reveal a strong preference for courses that teach practical skills about animals, their habitats and management. Concern over flat enrollments and decreased program visibility has led to the creation of a Chair of the Wildlife Program, a core of 10 faculty to serve the program and better coordination and communication between Biology and Wildlife. The major concern for this program is insufficient FTEs to teach the range of courses (mentioned above). The program attracts high caliber students who go on to have careers in wildlife management or research. The program could be strengthened if better advantage was taken of our location in Alaska, if the program were more flexible, and students were able to work more in the field.

4C. M.S. in Biological Sciences

The enrollment and number of degrees awarded in this program have increased over the last 5 years. Students are successful in publication and grant-writing and upon graduation they are highly employable in their chosen fields. Graduate compensation has increased and is now competitive on the national level.

Although masters' students are finishing their programs, it generally takes much longer than desired (2-3 years). The masters' comprehensive exam has been restructured in an effort to shorten the time to completion. Instead of an oral and written exam to assess general knowledge and competency, incoming students meet with members of the exam committee and their advisor to discuss strengths and weakness before the beginning of their first semester. The timing of this meeting is critical to address knowledge/skill gaps at the start of their program rather than after their first year. It also eliminates the time spent studying for the original comprehensive examination, time that can now be spent on coursework or their research project. In addition, within their first year, students present a research proposal to the same committee and then field questions on the theoretical background, proposed analysis, and significance of their proposal. These two steps will help define the academic direction for the student. In addition, DBW proposes to state clearer expectations on the time to completion, develop clearer progress points (goalposts) toward completion, and begin more stringent enforcement of time limits (maximum of 7 years for M.S.).

Other areas for improvement include: increase in funding for graduate students to travel to professional meetings, development of funding packages for compensation with the CNSM, IAB, and the initiatives (EPSCoR, IGERT), and the strengthening of the graduate curricula. Development of a core graduate curriculum that includes Research Design, Data Analysis, Scientific Writing, and Oral Communication would give students the tools and skills necessary to finish in a timely fashion. These courses would have to be offered on a regular basis.

As stated previously, centralization of graduate student offices and lab space would increase the ability of students to interact with faculty and graduate students outside their home labs. These interactions are important for intellectual development and collegial networking.

4D. M.A.T. in Biological Sciences

The M.A.T. in Biology program is designed to offer a graduate degree to students who have a B.A. or B.S. in Biology and are interested in teaching biology in K-12 schools. No students have

2009 Program Review
Biological Sciences: Wildlife Biology
Ver 5.0

been enrolled in this program since 2003 and only 3 students have been awarded this degree. Doug Schamel, who was very passionate about K-12 education but passed away a number of years ago, led this program. If there were potential students (K-12 teachers/interns) interested in this program and a faculty who were interested in leading it, then it would be a good program to keep in place. However, given the faculty resource allocation in DBW and the lack of interest, the committee recommends removing the program from the DBW even though it currently incurs no cost to the program.

4E. Ph.D. in Biological Sciences

The Ph.D. program in Biology and Wildlife is the largest Ph.D. program at UAF, with 5-8 graduates per year and >40 students enrolled. Enrollments have been quite steady over the past 3 years, and for most faculty members the advising of Ph.D. students constitutes a substantial component of their workload. The program has many strengths. Students are generally highly successful in obtaining funding (including through competitive grant programs), publishing papers in the scientific literature, and obtaining positions in their field following graduation. However, while some faculty have no difficulty attracting high-quality Ph.D. students, others, particularly those in newly developing fields in the department, have struggled to do so. Furthermore, the time to completion of the degree continues to be considerably longer than desirable. The development of a standard set of courses may improve cohort development and improve time until completion. Students are also hampered by lack of travel funds, limiting their exposure to the larger scientific communication and reducing opportunities for networking. Office space is marginal, with many students housed in "temporary" trailers. Finally, faculty perceive the admission process to be rather uneven, and it is often difficult to guarantee funding given that the number of TAships is continuously underfunded. Continued development of recruitment packages for top students along with better recruitment techniques (e.g. the development of a "recruitment week") is desirable, particularly for the biomedical research programs that are currently developing. Finally, the formal split of the degree into a PhD in Biological Sciences and a Ph.D. in Wildlife and Conservation Biology will help define both tracks better.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

It is evident from the committee's evaluation of the B.A., B.S., M.S., M.A.T., and Ph.D. in Biological Sciences and B.S. in Wildlife Biology programs within DBW that the department has six priority needs:

- 1) A single modern building that houses all of the biological science and wildlife academic and research programs, including faculty, staff, instructional space, and academic and research labs.
- 2) Core funding to support teaching assistants, departmental related travel, computer replacement, and support instructional staff for the core courses.
- 3) Improved advising at the undergraduate level and reducing the time to graduation of students in the DBW graduate degree programs.
- 4) Changing the core curriculum and offering biomedical courses with concentrations and emphasis on areas that are important and/or unique to Alaska.
- 5) Active student recruitment and advertising for the biology and wildlife programs by promoting their unique focus on Alaska and Arctic issues at the undergraduate and graduate level

Memorandum

To: Paul Layer
Dean, College of Natural Science and Mathematics

Ataur Chowdhury
Department Chair, Physics

Christa Mulder
Department Chair, Biology & Wildlife

William Simpson
Department Chair, Chemistry and Biochemistry

Anthony Rickard
Department Chair, Mathematics and Statistics

From: Susan Henrichs
Provost



Date: June 26, 2012

Subject: Programs being discontinued

The Chancellor's Cabinet has decided that the following degree programs should be discontinued, based on zero or very low enrollment:

MAT in Biology

BA in Physics

MAT in Physics

MS in Space Physics (to become an option under the Physics MS)

MS in General Science

BA in Chemistry

MAT in Mathematics

I did not receive appeals of these decisions. (I will respond to the appeals I did receive individually).

Therefore, I will instruct the registrar to suspend admissions to these programs (if you have not done so already). For programs with zero enrollment (MAT in Biology, Physics, and Mathematics) I ask you to submit the delete program request to the Faculty Senate office by early Fall 2012.

Programs that have students enrolled must continue until the students have sufficient time to graduate, normally at least 3 years from the start date for Master's and 5 or 6 years for the Bachelor's degree. Because there are no course requirements unique to the BA in Physics, the BA in Chemistry, the MS in Space Physics, or the MS in General Science, the students will still be able to complete the requirements without much effect on department resources, so there is no need to set firm deadlines. Once the last student has graduated or left the university, the program will need to be formally discontinued through the normal process.

FORMAT 4

Submit originals and one copy and electronic copy to **Governance/Faculty Senate Office**
(email electronic copy to fysenat@uaf.edu)

DELETION OF PROGRAM REQUEST

(UA Regulation 10.04.02)

(Please number the pages and include a table of contents if the request is lengthy.)

I. Cover Memorandum should include:

- A. Name of person preparing request
- B. Reasons for requesting deletion of program
- C. Relation of program to other programs in the local unit and system
Summarize the effects of the program deletion. For example, will deletion of the program cause other programs to have to alter their requirements as they utilize courses offered by the elected program.
- D. Summarize effects on personnel directly involved with the program
- E. Summarize effects deletion of program will have on budget of department
- F. Provide information on current student enrollment in program or courses
If the program currently has declared majors, supply provisions for phasing out program. Provide information on transfer possibilities within the system, if any.

II. Background Information

A copy of the original instructional program request, if available, or equivalent information should be submitted.

If no formal presentation of program approval was made, the following information should be submitted:

1. Identification of Program: Should include a brief description of the program and its goals
2. Enrollment Information: Past and present enrollment statistics should be included
3. Resource Requirements of Program: Should include personnel costs as well as support service costs and space requirements

III. Approval Signature Blocks provided for:

Department Head
Curriculum Council Chair
Dean
Dean of Graduate School (if graduate request)
President, UAF Faculty Senate
Chancellor
President
Board of Regents

IV. Provide an executive summary of about one page for inclusion in the Board of Regents committee agenda.