



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Box 353770 G-1 Communications Seattle, WA 98195-3770

Telephone: 206-543-5900 Fax: 206-685-3234 Web: <http://grad.washington.edu>

July 22, 2009

To: Phyllis M. Wise, Provost
Douglas J. Wadden, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Planning

From: Gerald J. Baldasty, Vice Provost and Dean
James S. Antony, Associate Vice Provost and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Re: Biology Teaching Program Review

This memorandum represents the Graduate School's closure in its facilitation of the ten-year review of the Master of Science in Biology for Teachers (MSBT) offered by the Interdisciplinary Biology Teaching Program in the Graduate School. We would like to note that, since the end of the review we met with the program leadership to discuss the graduate program. The leadership has begun to respond to recommendations outlined in the review.

More detailed comments on the program can be found in the documents referred to below. The review included the following milestones and documentation:

- Biology Teaching Program self-study (September 2007)
- Charge meeting between review committee and administrators (October 24, 2007)
- Site visit (November 15-16, 2007)
- Review committee report (January 11, 2008)
- Graduate and Professional Student Senate Report (December 29, 2008)
- Biology Teaching Program response to the report (February 2, 2008)
- Graduate School Council consideration of Review (May 15, 2008)

The review committee consisted of

Elizabeth Nesbitt, Associate Professor, Department of Earth and Space Sciences,
Curator, Burke Museum, Invertebrate Paleontology Division (Committee Chair)
Matthew Weinstein, Associate Professor, Education Program, UW Tacoma
George "Pinky" Nelson, Professor, Program Director and Graduate Adviser, Science,
Mathematics and Technology Education, Western Washington University

The committee described the biological science master's program for teachers as a "jewel" within the University. It is of high quality, administered well, and unique with its science requirements, its interdisciplinary nature, students' opportunities to work with diverse faculty in top research academic units, and enjoys high student satisfaction. The faculty is also high quality and dedicated to the program.

Review Committee's Recommendations

The committee made the following recommendations: that students be informed when they are accepted into the program that they will not be part of a cohort *per se*; provide students office space which would allow them to meet with their program peers; and provide a program orientation and campus tour to familiarize students with the campus.

Concerning faculty, the committee recommended that the Graduate School provide assistance to the Program Adviser to enable her to develop the program manual; formalize the Steering Committee's role and develop guidelines that outline expectations of faculty advisers and students; and that a regular professional assessment for the entire program be implemented to support ongoing quality and needs assessment, and to track the program's impact on students' professional lives.

Council Recommendations

The Council made the following recommendations to augment those of the review committee.

- Buy out the Program Coordinator's teaching time to develop a program manual.
- The program should improve the process for informing research faculty that the students are available to work on various research topics.
- The Master of Science in Biology for Teachers should be continued with the next review in 10 years.

We concur with the Council's comments and recommendations.

- c: Douglas G. Sprugel Professor and Director, Interdisciplinary Biology Teaching Group
Helen A. Buttemer, Graduate Program Adviser, Interdisciplinary Biology
Teaching Group
Tom T. Stritikus, Associate Dean of Academic Programs, College of Education
Werner Stuetzle, Divisional Dean of Natural Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences
Bruce Bare, Professor, School of Forest Resources
Biology Teaching Program Review Committee
Graduate School Council
Augustine McCaffery, Senior Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School
Jake Faleschini, President, Graduate and Professional Student Senate