

ASSESSMENT OF THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM 2006-2015

Our newly developed assessment plan for the Graduate Program in Biological Sciences will incorporate a number of new metrics for evaluating the program in the future. To retrospectively evaluate the success of our program, we have taken the most important parameter, namely the scientific careers of our graduates upon completion of an advanced degree in Biology. A summary of those data is provided below for both the M.S. and Ph.D. students.

This assessment examines students that completed their advanced degrees between 2006 and 2015. During that period of time, the Department of Biological Sciences graduated 94 students with advanced degrees in Biology, including 49 students receiving M.S. degrees and 45 students being awarded Ph.D. degrees. To assess the impact of our program in biology, we evaluated careers of those individuals after completing advanced degrees in our department. The data are divided into categories related to the degree:

M.S. graduates in Biology (2006-2015)

Of the 49 graduates examined, only 3 students were identified as leaving careers in science and 3 former graduates that could not track due to lack of information after leaving the University of Arkansas. Of the 43 remaining students, all have continued with science-related careers as indicated below:

- 18 Employed in science-related technical positions
- 13 Continued their education toward Ph.D. degrees at other institutions
- 10 Employed as science instructors at various academic institutions
- 02 Continued their education toward an advanced professional degree in dentistry or medicine

Thus, 88% of graduate students obtaining an M.S. degree in the Department of Biological Sciences have remained successfully engaged in science. A majority of the successful M.S. degree students (57%) entered the workforce in science-related technical positions or as science instructors. Another 41% of our M.S. degree graduates continued their education toward a Ph.D., M.D. or D.D.S.

Ph.D. graduates in Biology (2006-2015)

Of the 45 students awarded a Ph.D. in biology examined, all were actively employed in science careers as indicated below:

- 24 Employed as Instructors, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors or Professors academic institutions nationally and internationally
- 13 Employed in postdoctoral training positions
- 08 Employed in nonacademic scientific careers (i.e. government jobs, industry, etc.)

Thus, 100% of graduate students awarded a Ph.D. degree from the Department of Biological Sciences have remained successfully engaged in science careers. The majority of the doctoral graduates are in academic positions (53%) with the title of Instructor, Assistant, Associate or Full Professor. An additional 18% are employed in nonacademic professional positions in science and 29% are currently working in postdoctoral training positions.

Summary of Assessment (2006-2015)

The Department of Biological Sciences has successfully educated and trained 94 students that were awarded advanced degrees in Biology. The 49 students receiving M.S. degrees have maintained a GPA as required to be awarded the degree. Additionally, they have successfully written M.S. theses and defended their theses before a committee of experts in the respective fields of biology. The 45 students receiving Ph.D. degrees have maintained a GPA as required by the University to be awarded the degree. In addition, they have successfully passed both written and oral qualifying examinations to enter doctoral candidacy. Finally, the doctoral students have successfully written doctoral dissertations and defended the dissertation before a committee of experts in their field of biology. Most importantly, the vast majority of graduate students (94%) completing advanced degrees in biology have remained successfully employed in science-related disciplines after leaving the University of Arkansas.