Expected Outcomes: Strong Foundation in Basic Sciences

When students complete their degree they will have a strong foundation in the basic sciences along with a specialty skill aligned with their chosen specialty option (Turfgrass Management, Science, Production, or Soil, Water and Land Use)

Related typical general education outcomes:

1. Information Literacy
2. Scientific Literacy

Assessment methods

Method: exit exams

A 100 question exit exam was developed by the faculty and administered to the seniors

Findings:

Five students took the basic skills Exam in 2012. Four students had acceptable scores. Scores for most students were high enough to suggest that they would not have a problem passing the national certification exam for consulting agronomists. No particular subject matter area could be identified as a specific problem area, but as a group and as usual, the average scores were low with the soils related questions which are not uncommon

How did you use findings for improvement?

See additional comments

Additional comments:

Although we haven't tracked scores by curriculum options, some thoughts in the department were that low scores on the soils portion of the exam may be due to the fact that interest for most students are in plant and not crop sciences. The implementation of the Soil, Water, and Land Use option which is for students interested in soils and tracking scores by options will give us a better idea if expected competency in soils is at the level it should be.

Method: Exit surveys

Exit surveys were developed to gather students input on our facilities and programs

Findings:

On the exit surveys and interviews, students were for the most part complimentary of our program and the option they chose. The commonly occurring complaint, as in previous years, was poor facilities (classrooms and labs), the lack of an environmental science option in the department curriculum, flexibility in the curriculum, and scheduling.

How did you use findings for improvement?

To improve scheduling problem, our courses are being developed for on-line courses. Most of the undergraduate courses are now on line and are being utilized to help avoid scheduling
conflicts. To increase flexibility, the curriculum committee continuously evaluates courses for menu options instead of specific requirements. The Soil, Water, and Land Use option has been approved by the Board of Trustees and this will allow a better course selection for students interested in soil and environmental sciences.

Additional comments:

Technologies in the classrooms we control have been improved. The teaching labs are still outdated and will be until Funchess Hall is renovated or replaced. Currently, replacement building for Funchess Hall is in top 5 priorities for the University

Method: Certification exams

Certification exams includes the International CCA exams when information is available

Findings:

Four of our graduates took the National CCA exam this year and all passed. This is an indication that our curriculum is providing the basic knowledge students need to enter the work force, and that our curriculum meets the desired requirements for a national crop consultant.

How did you use findings for improvement?

None

Additional comments:

None

Expected Outcomes: Professional Competency

When students enter the workforce or graduate school they will be well prepared for entrance into the work force or graduate school

Related typical general education outcomes:

1 Information Literacy
11 Scientific Literacy

Assessment methods

Method: Successful Job Placement

Initial job placement will be monitored to see if students are getting jobs related to their degree and degree option.

Findings:

Eight students graduated in 11/12. Two applied for and were accepted to Graduate School. Six entered the workforce with entry-level positions in jobs related to their degree. During the past year we have not received any complaints from either employers or the former students that they are lacking training or skills, except as in previous years there have been some concerns received from employers that students in the turf option were short on turf related basic expertise. These concerns were mostly from those who supervise our internships.

How did you use findings for improvement?

For the turf option, we added two courses. AGRN 3200 which is applied turf management and
is a hands on type course taught at the turf research unit and AGRN 5180 which is sports turf management. Most of our turf students are employed by some type of sports turf management organization, primarily golf courses and athletic fields.

Additional comments:

None

Method: Graduate School Admission

Students in the science track will be prepared to enter Graduate School and will not have difficulties with admission into recognized Universities.

Findings:

The two students who entered graduate school were accepted by their first school of choice and with research assistantships. One stayed at Auburn and the other went to Michigan State.

How did you use findings for improvement?

not used in 2012

Additional comments:

none