Expected Outcome 1: 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:

I Information Literacy
II Scientific Literacy

Assessment methods

Method: exit exams

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

Findings:

Eighteen students took the basic skills Exam in 2013. Five scored above 80%, 10 between 70 and 80, and 3 in the 60’s. The distribution is not much different than occurs with large numbers taking the national certifications exams. These scores suggest that most of our student would not have a problem passing the national certification exam for consulting agronomists on their first attempt. For a specific subject matter area, the ones that appear to be a problem are basic soils and environmental science which are closely related subjects.
How did you use findings for improvement?

The issue with possible too low of a score in the basic soils area was passed on to the departmental curriculum committee. They are discussing the issue and will make recommendations for addressing the problem.

Additional comments:

none

Methods: 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), flexibility in the curriculum, scheduling, and lack of some courses, specifically crop physiology.

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 which has actually decreased complaints on scheduling. To increase flexibility, the curriculum committee continuously evaluates courses for menu options instead of specific requirements. In previous years the finding indicated that students wanted more environmentally related options in the department. The recent implementation of a Soil, Water, and Land Use option will allow a better course selection for students interested in soil and environmental sciences. In addition, the curriculum committee is looking at instructions assignments. As a result, crop physiology has been reassigned, and other reassignments will likely occur that will address our finding in the exit surveys.

Additional Comments:

As stated last year, 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

**Methods: Certification exams**
Certification exams includes the International CCA exams when information is available

**Findings:**
Five 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 Outcome 2: Professional Competency**

When students enter the workforce or graduate school they will be well prepared.

Related typical general education outcomes:

I Information Literacy
II 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:**
Ten students graduated in FY 12/13. Three applied for and were accepted to Graduate School. Six entered the workforce with entry-level positions in jobs related to their degree (three accepted positions with golf courses, one with
NRCS and two returned to family farms). We lost track of one student. During the past year we have not received any complaints from either employers or the former students that they are lacking training or skills. In previous years there were 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 course taught at the turf research unit and AGRN 5180 which is sports turf management organization, primarily golf courses and athletic fields. We believe that the addition of these courses satisfied the concerns of those who hire students from our turfgrass option.

**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 three students who entered graduate school were accepted by their first school of choice and with research assistantships. Two stayed at Auburn (1 in the department and 1 in plant pathology), and the other went to the University of Arkansas.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**
Not used in 2013.

**Additional comments:**
None