Expected Outcome 1. MASTERY OF FUNDAMENTAL KNOWLEDGE OF NUTRITION

MS thesis and non-thesis students will demonstrate mastery of fundamental aspects of a sub-discipline within Nutrition.

**Assessment Method 1:** Knowledge of sub-discipline, Nutrition:

Fundamental knowledge of nutrition principles integrating biochemical and physiological science

**Assessment Method Description**

Students will be evaluated on the basis of written exams prepared and evaluated by faculty in NTRI 7510: Vitamins

**Findings**

Of a total of 8 MS students, 62.5% of students made a grade of ‘A’, 25% of students made a ‘B’, and one student failed the class (12.5%). The median final score was 90.25, with a minimum of 57/100 and a maximum of 97.5/100. Students were evaluated on the basis of exams (3 regular and 1 final) and writing assignments (5 abstracts and 1 term-paper), which covered cognitive aspects Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Students had the most difficulty with knowledge and comprehension. Students felt challenged to demonstrate memory (knowledge) of vitamin functions, and vitamin digestion, absorption, transport, and excretion. Also students felt challenged organizing, comparing, translating, and interpreting (comprehension) how vitamins interact with other nutrients.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vitamin topic areas</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structure, Nomenclature, Chemistry</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Sources</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digestion, Absorption, Transport, and Excretion</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functions</td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficiency &amp; Toxicity</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of status</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with nutrients</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were better prepared to achieve high scores on assessments related to analysis, evaluation, and synthesis reflected in higher scores for writing Abstracts (Median score 89/100) and a Scholarly paper (Median score of 98/100).

For the Scholarly paper assignment, the instructor required a 2-page outline draft, 2 weeks prior to the deadline. Feedback was provided to students on the 2-page outline draft, which was also graded for content. These interventions helped students achieve a minimum score of 87/100 and a maximum of 100/100 on the term-paper.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

One of the major feedback received regarding the course was the volume of material covered for a 2-credit course. The field of this sub-discipline within Nutrition has advanced tremendously within the last decade, and therefore additional material was being added on to course materials. Based on student feedback and course needs, this course has now been revised from 2 credit hours to 3 credit hours. It is assumed that this will provide the time necessary to teach this course more effectively. Also, one student failed this course. This was an International student and was primarily a language barrier issue. While the student could answer multiple-choice questions, the student found it difficult to answer short answer and essay-type questions. The student was referred to the ‘English as a Second Language (ESL) Program’ at Auburn University.

**Additional Comments**

None.
Assessment Method 2: Knowledge of sub-discipline, Hotel and Restaurant Management: Mastery of fundamental aspects of global hospitality challenges and management

Assessment Method Description
Students will be tested on central aspects of global hospitality management and its challenges, in the course HRMT 6570: Global Hospitality.

Findings
Using a combination of assessments including homework, research proposal report & presentation, and exams, students are assessed for their mastery of fundamental aspects of the issues facing global hospitality. The one student enrolled in this course achieved a grade of 'A'.

The following Table shows the distribution of points for each of the assessments listed above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exam I</th>
<th>Homework</th>
<th>Research Project</th>
<th>Final Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Points (%)</td>
<td>100 (20%)</td>
<td>75 (15%)</td>
<td>200 (40%)</td>
<td>125 (25%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student demonstrated good writing skills with a 'structured-writing' goal, evidenced by his score on the Country Project. Rubrics that were used to grade the structured writing included: Content, organization, development, use of appropriate terminology in the field, and correct grammar and spelling. Overall, the student demonstrated the ability to define terms, work assigned real-life business problems with good examples and using appropriate methods, and explained well why he used these methods to solve the business problems. The one area of concern was his ability to structure and present precise and concise answers in the limited answer space allowed.

How did you use findings for improvement?
To improve writing skills, specifically effective writing using a minimum number of words, in future semesters the course instructor will show students a number of actual examples of appropriate structure for effective communication. This will help students better organize and construct their answers more effectively. Secondly, greater emphasis on doing hospitality business internationally is desired in the program. The course instructor is currently considering ways to improve the ability of students to critically identify areas in need of further research. This will be monitored over the next few years to assess the impact of such an exercise.


Additional Comments
None.

Assessment Method 3: Development of professional abstracts

Assessment Method Description
As part of NTRI 7510 – ‘Vitamins’, Master's students will search and analyze evidence-based scientific literature to develop professional abstracts. For writing Abstracts, students were required to read a published journal article of a given topic area, and write a summary of the article using the following subheadings: Title, authors, citation, introduction/background, methods, results, and discussion/conclusions. The instructor provided clear guidelines and templates for each of these assignments. A grading rubric was used to assess the writing skills – this is shown below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NTRI 7510: Vitamins - Grading Rubric for Abstracts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unacceptable (Below 70%)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization and development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Use of appropriate scientific vocabulary/terminology</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar, sentence structure and spelling</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Findings
Students were required to submit 5 written abstracts. The median score for Abstracts was 89/100, with a minimum of 78 and a maximum of 100. Using the above rubric, students achieved a score of 'Proficient' or 'Advanced' rating for 'Content' and 'Use of Scientific vocabulary/terminology. Lower ratings were received for 'Organization and development'. For the first Abstract writing assignment, the instructor provided a detailed written feedback, and an opportunity to revise their Abstract based on the feedback. An example of such a feedback is shown below.

Abstract #1

**Title:** Riboflavin prophylaxis in pediatric and adolescent migraine

**Authors:** Maria Condo*, Annio Posar, Annalisa Arbizzani et al.

**Citation:** J Headache Pain. 10(5):361-365, 2008 October

**Objectives/Purpose:** Although migraine as a common neurological disorder may lower the life quality of children and adolescents, most of the studies are related to riboflavin preventing migraine in adults rather than children and adolescents. So the authors try-to-study if we examined that whether using the effectiveness of riboflavin to treat resistant migraine for children and adolescents is effective.

**Methods:** They choose 41 pediatric and adolescent patients diagnosed with migraine but without organic or psychiatric diseases were recruited for this study. Then use a 3-phase observation was followed: 1. No prophylactic medicine baseline period; 2. riboflavin treatment for 3 months(2), 4 months(2a) and 8 months(2b) respectively; 3. suspension of riboflavin. The end points were mean attack frequency, mean headache intensity and symptomatic therapy responsiveness as importance order. They also consider other effects such as gender, age, different migraine types, aura symptoms and age of headache onset age. Then they use Wilcoxon sign rank and Fisher exact tests were used for statistical analysis.

**Results:** Mean attack frequency and mean headache intensity reduced in the second period and continued to decreasing in the third period. More specifically, in the second period, the therapy continued for 4 month seems a significantly efficient for decreased mean attack frequency, while the efficient for mean headache intensity is was not obvious changed. For those Subjects who used the symptomatic drugs during phase 2 and 3, a positive rate has been received that riboflavin treatment can enhance the medicine's effects. All of these results show no relationship with the riboflavin taken dose, different migraine type and age of headache onset. But for sex and age, males seems more likely to be in the intensity-responder group, while younger patients(under 12 years) are more likely to be in the frequency-responder group. It also has few side effects occurred during the treatment.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** According to Based on the positive results, the authors suggest that riboflavin may be effective for prophylactic treatment for children and adolescents with migraine. The criteria approach for this treatment is 200mg/day of riboflavin for 4 months therapy, which will meet the better results in this study. Comparing with other related studies, without proposed the placebo sample for the ethical reason, the study hold by authors have some main breakthroughs: 1. the study with larger sample show the positive data in treating migraine with riboflavin for children and adolescents. 2. The endpoint for this study is not only headache frequency but also headache intensity. 3. The results confirmed that 200mg/day of riboflavin maybe adequate and change the treating duration from 3 months to 4 months. 4. Using riboflavin to processor this study was cost efficient and no adverse effects avoided were observed. Still, more confirmations are needed by further researches. However, additional studies are required to confirm these findings.
How did you use the findings for improvement?

While these approaches early on in the semester have helped students write better-quality abstracts, some students still find it a challenge. Students with mediocre or below-average writing skills are currently being referred to the Auburn University Miller Writing Center, to seek additional help in improving their writing skills. It is recommended that course instructors follow up with such students to make sure adequate progress is being made to improve writing skills.

Additional Comments
None.

Expected Outcome 2. CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Master's students will demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving skills

Assessment Method 1: Evaluation of research seminar

Assessment Method Description

As part of NTRI 7850/7856 – ‘Graduate Research Seminar’, students will search and analyze scientific literature to develop a professional abstract. Students are critically evaluated for 4 areas - abstract, content, presentation, and discussion. Specifically, to assess scientific methodology, the content portion of the evaluation form will be used. The Seminar Evaluation form (grading rubric) is attached. Input from faculty members and students were used to assign grades.
**NTRI 7850/8850 RESEARCH SEMINAR**

**Presenter's Name:** ___________________________  **Date:** __________

**Criteria for Evaluating NDHM Seminar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Concise but gives pertinent points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accurately summarizes presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Correctly referenced</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clearly stated problem &amp; justification at beginning</td>
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<td>Logically developed &amp; arranged ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presented well chosen studies / information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gave a clear summary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stated study limitations &amp;/or unsolved problems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spoke confidently, audibly without distracting mannerisms(^1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used appropriate vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Showed clear, concise visual aids</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated text smoothly with visuals</td>
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</table>

\(^1\)Identify distracting mannerisms of which the presenter should be aware.

| **Discussion** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Initiated discussion if no questions asked |  |  |  |  |  |
| Adequate knowledge of subject to answer most questions |  |  |  |  |  |
| Maintained leadership (including under difficult situations) |  |  |  |  |  |

Please check appropriate box: Evaluated by: Faculty_____  Graduate student_____  

**Abstract Grade:** _______ A _______ B _______ C _______ D _______ F  

**Content Grade:** _______ A _______ B _______ C _______ D _______ F  

**Oral Presentation Grade:** _______ A _______ B _______ C _______ D _______ F

**PLEASE USE BACK OF PAGE FOR OTHER COMMENTS**

**Findings**

All students received a grade of either an A or A- in the content portion of his/her seminar. Students received a rating of 4 or 5 for clearly stating problem and justification for study, for developing ideas logically, choosing and presenting key findings in the field, and stating study limitations. However, there were a few areas where there was room for improvement which is discussed in the next section.
Expected Outcome 3. PROFICIENCY IN SCIENTIFIC METHODOLOGY
Master's students will demonstrate proficiency in using the scientific methodology to identify and evaluate problems in their field of study.

Assessment Method 1: Evaluation of research proposal

Assessment Method Description
Students will search and analyze scientific literature to develop a research proposal based on scientific methodology. As part of NTRI 7050/7056 - Methods of Research, Master's students will submit a written proposal to the instructor, based on the following criteria - Research proposal:
Students are required to complete a research proposal that addresses a research question of the students choosing. The research proposal must include literature review, research question(s), hypothesis, rationale and justification, proposed research design, methods, measures, and analyses, and limitations of proposed research.

Findings
In NTRI 7050/7056 - Methods of Research, Summer 2014. In this course, 100% of students made an ‘A’ grade on the written research proposal. Students did well in the section on Literature Review, and in formulating a testable hypothesis, but had difficulty developing the experimental approach, and therefore received lower scores for the latter.

How did you use findings for improvement?
Based on the previous year’s assessment data, faculty incorporated additional work related to identifying and formulating a hypotheses as part of their assignments. This practice seemed to have improved the performance of the students on the ‘Hypothesis’ section of the research proposal. However, instructors had not included an additional assignment on developing an experimental strategy. This may be one reason why students received lower scores for this section. Faculty will incorporate this the next time this course is taught and offer students the opportunity to develop skills related to developing an adequately described experimental approach, that includes research design, methods, measures, analyses, and limitations of proposed research.
Additional Comments
None.

Assessment Method 2: Evaluation of empirical-based research proposal – Hotel and Restaurant Management sub-discipline

Assessment Method Description
Hotel and Restaurant Management Master's students enrolled in HRMT 6570/6576 (Global Hospitality) will submit a written research proposal addressing a topic related to international hospitality business. This is an empirically-based rigorous proposal which is expected to be completed later into the graduate studies and submitted to an appropriate academic journal. The proposed research should contribute to the literature and move it forward. It is based on theoretically-justified hypotheses addressing specific empirical phenomenon in the hospitality field and later tested with actual data gathered for this research. The topic has to be approved by the instructor, and is specific and narrow in scope. The completed report is in the range of 15-20 pages, following the formatting specified in this syllabus.

Findings
Within the sub-discipline of Hotel and Restaurant Management, MS student (100%) enrolled in Global Hospitality (NTRI 6570/6576), earned an 'A' on the research proposal, demonstrating a good understanding of the various components of the research proposal. The Introduction adequately covered background, the problem and purpose of the study, research questions, and significance of the study. Literature review was comprehensive, though some aspects of proposed research design & methods including sampling, data collection, survey instrument, and statistical analysis could be improved.

How did you use findings for improvement?
The Hotel and Restaurant Management program is meeting the goal. Still, students will continue to be directed to pay special attention to the sections on survey instruments and statistical analyses. Additionally, students will be encouraged to pay special attention to approval statements regarding responsible conduct of research, including Institutional Review Board (IRB). Additionally, efforts to identify conflicts of interests, and ethical aspects will also be encouraged.

Additional Comments
None.
Assessment Method 3: Evaluation of scholarly papers

Assessment Method Description
Master's students will search and analyze referred, scientific literature to develop a scholarly paper.
Evaluation of scholarly papers was carried out by the course instructor. Specific guidelines were provided to students about preparation of the scholarly paper. These included formatting guidelines, and structure of the abstract (in the following order, the title of the published paper, list of authors, journal citation, objectives/purpose of study, methods, results, and summary). References had to be identified in text by Arabic numbers in parentheses. An example of how a reference need to be cited was also provided to students. Students were required to watch eBriefings from New York Academy of Sciences web page on various topics related to Vitamin D and health:
http://www.nyas.org/Publications/Ebriefings/Detail.aspx?cid=74a3c404-4e50-4594-9219-58da125f12df
Students were required to choose a topic, and write a 'review-article' like manuscript, that was at least 8 pages in length, not including citations, on the topic area. The term paper was graded for content, organization and development of topic, use of appropriate scientific vocabulary/terminology, and grammar, sentence structure, and spelling.

Findings
Students generated an outstanding array of articles. Of the 8 students registered, 87.5% made an 'A', and 12.5% made a 'B'. For the Scholarly paper assignment, the instructor required a 2-page outline draft, 2 weeks prior to the deadline. Feedback was provided to students on the 2-page outline draft, which was also graded for content. This intervention helped students achieve a minimum score of 87/100 and a maximum of 100/100 on the term-paper.

How did you use the findings for improvement?
Information regarding the scholarly paper was provided early in the Semester, which provided plenty of time for students to adequately research and review the topic areas, and choose a topic area for the scholarly paper. Also, requiring a 2-page outline draft, 2 weeks prior to the actual deadline for the Scholarly paper also removed to a certain extent, the element of procrastination. Written instructions were provided to students to avail the facilities of the Auburn University Miller Writing Center, before they turned in their scholarly paper. Course instructor
wishes to continue this practice as it has helped students achieve a higher score and since graduate students are required to develop a scholarly paper for their thesis or non-thesis work.

**Additional Comments**
None

**Expected Outcome 4. ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**
Master’s students will effectively communicate in their field of study

**Assessment Method 1:** Evaluation of oral presentation of topic areas in Nutrition

**Assessment Method Description**
Students in NTRI 7530 (Human Nutrient Metabolism) were required to make an oral presentation of an assigned topic area within Human Nutrient Metabolism that evaluated a. Overall quality of presentation, b. Overall breadth of knowledge, and c. Quality of response to questions. Based on these responses an overall assessment of the oral presentation was made by both students in class and by faculty that teach the course. Presentation was limited to 20 minutes which included 5 minutes for Q and A and ensuing discussion of topic. Students were provided with a copy of the grading rubric for oral presentation, early in the semester. This grading rubric is shown below.
Findings
All 6 students in this course achieved an overall grade that “exceeds expectations”. Students either ‘met’ or ‘exceeded’ expectations for all 3 metrics: overall quality of presentation, overall breadth of presentation, and quality of response to questions.

How did you use findings for improvement?
Course instructors worked proactively with students, meeting with each student separately and discussed the content of the presentation prior to the oral presentation. This strategy helped students to correct any deficits for content area. Students were also encouraged to rehearse prior to their actual presentation to keep presentation within the time limits and to develop effective communication skills. Further, faculty provided students with a recommended reading: Bragg L. The art of talking about science. Science 1966; 154: 1613-1616. These strategies may have contributed to students achieving ‘meets expectation’ or ‘exceeds expectations’ for effective oral communication skills. These strategies will be continued for future
classes.

Additional Comments
None.

Assessment Method 2: Oral presentation of research proposal

Assessment Method Description
Master's students in NTRI 7050 – ‘Methods of Research’ and NTRI 7056 (Methods of Research - distance course) were required to make an oral presentation to the instructor and graduate students enrolled in this class.

Findings
Students were required to make a 10 minute PowerPoint presentation outlining their research proposal, developed for either nutrition or hospitality management. Eighty percent of the students made an ‘A’ and 20% made a grade of ‘B’ for the oral presentation part in this course. Students were proficient in Organization of the oral presentation, with a logical flow, clear purpose, and support. The content accomplished the goal of the assignment and all major topics were covered. Additionally, the visuals were clear and professional. However, there was room for improvement in delivery technique – students demonstrated uneven enthusiasm and confidence levels, and several had difficulties staying within the allotted time.

How did you use findings for improvement?
Feedback was provided after the assignment was completed by the professor. To improve oral presentation skills, faculty will incorporate an additional assignment in the course where the student will serve as a “discussion leader” for a primary journal article – the format would be similar to that of a journal club. This strategy is expected to provide students practice with speaking to the class and preparing a presentation that has a specific time limit.

Additional Comments
None.

Assessment Method 3: Evaluation of Research Seminar

Assessment Method Description
Students in NTRI 7850 (Research Seminar for Master's program) will search and analyze refereed, current topics in nutrition, dietetics and hospitality
management to develop a professional abstract and make an oral presentation for departmental faculty and students. Students are critically evaluated for 4 areas - abstract, content, presentation, and discussion. The Seminar Evaluation form (grading rubric) is attached. Input from faculty members and students are used to assign grades.

Findings
All students enrolled in the course received an 'A+', 'A', or 'A-' grade in the oral presentation and discussion part of the seminar. Students received an overall rating of 4/5 or 5/5 for using appropriate vocabulary, scientific terminology, speaking confidently, and integrating text with clear, and concise visual aids. No distracting mannerisms were identified. Students demonstrated good to excellent knowledge of subject to answer most questions during discussion and maintained leadership of the seminar through the discussion period.

How did you use the findings for improvement?
The MS in Nutrition program is meeting the goal and NTRI 7850 continues to be a useful experience for students to enhance their oral communication skills. To further enhance the students’ performance, the course instructor is evaluating the possibility of requiring potential future students to attend at least two class sessions of this course as guests before they enroll in the class.

Additional Comments
None.

Expected Outcome 5. PREPAREDNESS
Master's students will have applied/made plans for a professional position or for higher education programs.

Assessment Method 1: Graduating graduate student survey

Assessment Method Description
The graduating graduate student survey has several questions that assess the preparedness of Master's students for employment at public, private, non-profit, or governmental organizations or pursuit of further
education. Additionally, students will be asked about the quality of the Nutrition graduate program at Auburn University.

**Findings**

**Preparedness:**

1. Applied for jobs or have plans to apply for jobs or pursue higher education: Thirteen out of 19 students (68%) polled, indicated that they would pursue higher education, either at Auburn University or at other Universities. Three students (16%) indicated that they secured employment in a College/University as faculty or business/industry. One student (5%) was self-employed.

2. Conference presentations/publications: Nine out of 19 students (47%) indicated that they presented peer-reviewed conference papers of their graduate studies in Nutrition, with 11% having 3 peer-reviewed conference papers or posters that they presented during the period of their graduate studies. Only 2 students out of 9 (11%) indicated that he/she has an accepted (in press) or published a peer-reviewed journal article.

3. Other questions on survey:

   - My graduate program was academically challenging: 100% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed.
   - My graduate program prepared me to teach: 100% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed.
   - My graduate program prepared me to carry out research: 91% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed, while 19% of students disagreed.
   - My graduate program kept pace with recent trends and developments in the field: 100% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed.
   - Overall rating of Graduate Program: Students rated the overall quality of the Master's program in Nutrition as excellent (68%) or good (32%).

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

While we are preparing Master's students for jobs and higher education, there are several areas for improvement.

- It is anticipated that 50% (currently we are at 47%) of our graduating Master's students (thesis option) would have presented peer-reviewed conference papers or posters during the period of
their graduate studies in Nutrition at Auburn University. We may be meeting this goal, as our survey data does not separate thesis vs. non-thesis students.

- 25% (currently we are at 11%) of our graduating Master's students (thesis option) would have authored or co-authored (accepted in press or published) a peer-reviewed journal article during the period of their graduate studies in Nutrition at Auburn University. This is an area that we need to improve.

- 50% of our graduating Master's students (thesis option) would have opportunities for experiential learning (summer internships in collaborating labs, industry, or outreach activities). This is not currently part of the survey, and would recommend that this question be added.

**Additional Comments**

None.