

MSU Departmental Assessment Update Spring 2008

Department: Veterinary Molecular Biology

Department Head: Dr. Mark Quinn

Assessment Coordinator: Dr. Mark Quinn

Date: May 12, 2008

Degrees/Majors/Options Offered by Department

Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology—Animal Systems Option

Biotechnology Animal Systems Assessment
Presented at the May 12, 2008 Faculty Meeting

Faculty present: Richard Bessen, Michele Hardy, Allen Harmsen, Mark Jutila, Benfang Lei, David Pascual, Mark Quinn, Edward Schmidt, Michael White, Robert Cramer

Overall, students gave positive reviews of the biotechnology program on their exit interviews in 2007/2008. This is the primary mechanism used for feedback. Many students indicated this is the best science-based degree program at MSU because it provides them skill needed to directly enter the workforce.

Changes made to the program this year based on faculty recommendations, etc.:

- Advisors were reminded to begin discussing internship options earlier with the students.
- The DA-1 form has been revised to indicate courses required for the Pre-Vet students but not required for Biotechnology students. These are to meet Veterinary School admission requirements.
- The possibility of offering options for students who leaving early for Veterinary School and want to complete a degree at MSU is acceptable. At minimum, the students will need to complete all lab courses (VTMB 411-414, VTMB 421-422) and the Internship (VTMB 476). The mechanism of how to accept credits back is still not clear and needs further clarification.

Some major comments and suggested changes to consider are summarized below:

1. Courses

- As in past years, all students indicated the Methods courses and Internship were the most valuable.
- Several students suggested that we reevaluate overlap between lectures taught in VTMB 421 and 422 and consistency in the labs taught for these classes.
- Further discussion is needed regarding addition of a Preveterinary Option to the Biotechnology Degree. Input on the proposed curriculum and effects on courses are still needed.

2. Advising

- Overall, the students were satisfied with advising.
- As before, some students indicated it would be helpful to move to VTMB advising sooner because they were out of sequence for many of the lab courses.
- Some students arrive quite late in their curriculum and expect to complete all methods courses and internship in one year. This is unrealistic and leads to a poor internship.
- Adding new advisors should be considered.

3. Internship

- The students again commented on the importance of a good internship experience.
- Some students still need more help in identifying internships.
- Internships at the Veterinary Diagnostic Lab need to be reevaluated because recent students are not developing hypothesis-driven projects.

Recommendations (minutes) from the faculty meeting (5/12/2008):

- VTMB 421 and 422 curricula will be evaluated and revised this summer
- Addition of a Preveterinary Option will be reevaluated.
- Internships will be scrutinized to make sure the projects are meeting the required scope.

- A new biotech advisor will be solicited from among the junior faculty members.