

Summary of Recommendations for Change

The Botany Department is a highly functioning department. They have a unique identity and niche in Utah and the region, and an excellent reputation in student preparation into field types of careers. They hold a high level of collegiality, enthusiasm, and dedication – all of which should be rewarded and nourished. We recommend that the Botany faculty number be maintained at a minimum of six faculty so that the curriculum can be modernized and further energized.

We further recommend that the Department consider addressing the following:

Standard A, Mission Statement. The Department is meeting guidelines, but we recommend they develop a strategic plan which will aid in guiding new faculty hires and restructuring the curriculum.

Standard B, Curriculum.

-The Department should carefully reassess the curriculum in terms of serving both botany majors and general education .

-Majors.

-Additional research should be done to insure that the proposed pre-natural medicine Track A option meets the specific requirements and expectations of existing programs in natural medicine.

- The core curriculum for the major should be standardized for each track with necessary changes to additional botany course requirements.

-The contribution of existing upper division electives should be evaluated in terms of existing faculty and the desired expertise of future hires.

-The Department should pursue additional interdepartmental cooperation in common areas:

-An introductory biology course, or sequence, as recommended in “Vision and Change” and including cell/molecular biology, genetics, evolution, and ecology.

-The biology composite teaching major.

-General Education.

-The Department should consider pursuing additional interdepartmental cooperation in offering general education courses.

Standard C, Student Learning and Assessment.

-The Department should consider adapting existing assessment instruments, validated content inventories and inventories of general science literacy skills, in all classes

-The Department should consider developing a curriculum assessment rubric utilizing information from student portfolios.

-The Department should pursue additional means of sending students to professional meetings.

-The Department should pursue cooperating with other science departments to establish a local *Beta Beta Beta* chapter and *Sigma Xi* Chapter.

Standard D, Academic Advising.

-We recommend that student advising be distributed among the faculty.

Standard E Faculty.

-Faculty development has been sacrificed to maintain the existing curriculum as faculty numbers declined. As new faculty are hired, existing faculty should reduce their teaching loads and re-focus on

their own professional development, including: research in collaboration both with students and faculty colleagues; participation in workshops; and attendance at professional meetings.

-New faculty hires should complement the current strengths of the Department and add to the Department's teaching and research capacity.

Standard F. Support.

-A half-time, 10-month Administrative Assistant is inadequate and places additional burden on an already overstretched faculty to do clerical work. We recommend that this be made a full-time position.

-The Botany Club should be encouraged to develop innovative and engaging (interactive?) displays for the Natural History Museum focusing on plants.

-Both the herbarium and greenhouse are indispensable resources for botany teaching and research and should be included in plans for the new science facility.

Standard G. Relationships with the external community.

-The Department needs more marketing and recruiting assistance.

-We encourage plans for forming a General Advisory Committee and an Employer Advisory Committee for the department.

-We encourage further outreach to tribal communities and the local schools.