

## **MCB Faculty Meeting, 15 February 2007 (4:00 pm, FO 3.616)**

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Breen, D'Mello, DeJong, Draper, Gray, Miller, Reitzer, Spiro, Xia,

Faculty absent: Bulla, Burr, Gonzalez, Goodman, Hannig, Levene, Pace

Lecturers present: Rippel

Student representative: Nazanin Majdzadeh

A voting quorum was not present

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved without comment.

### **Assessments of MCB degree programs**

Gray summarized the annual reporting requirements and circulated the following documents:

- Program objectives for the BA in Biology, the BS in Biology, and the BS in Molecular Biology
- A spreadsheet showing core courses in the undergraduate programs, their measures and target levels, and results for Fall, 2006
- Program objectives for the MS in Molecular and Cell Biology and the MS in Biotechnology
- A spreadsheet showing core courses in the graduate programs, their measures and target levels, and results for Fall, 2006

In most courses for which data were available at the meeting, student performance exceeded the target level, and therefore faculty agreed that students seemed to be meeting the learning goals. However, assessments at this stage are only partial, and conclusions were therefore tentative.

In BIOL5420 (Molecular Biology, graduate core course), students narrowly failed to meet the target levels in two out of three assessment measures. Two of the course instructors, Gonzalez and Hannig, were not present at the meeting to discuss the assessment. The meeting noted that, in both cases, 64% of students (against a target of 70%) did meet the target levels, and therefore at this time no modifications were suggested.

There was extensive discussion of BIOL3301 (Classical and Molecular Genetics, undergraduate core course), in which 56% of students scored >50% of the points on the four exams in the course. The meeting agreed that material in BIOL3301 is conceptually difficult, and one of the course instructors (Miller) stressed that the exams are challenging, which is reflected in the target level (50% of students score >50%).

## **Mission for the PhD program in Molecular and Cell Biology**

Gray circulated a document listing student learning outcomes and measures for the PhD program in Molecular and Cell Biology.

Under Measure 6, the meeting agreed that the target level should be that 80% of students demonstrate satisfactory performance on research reports in the consensus opinion of the Supervisory Committee.

Under Measure 8, the meeting agreed that the measure (scoring the dissertation) relates to writing and communication as well as to critical thinking objectives.

Under Measure 9, the meeting agreed that the target should be that 100% of students have a paper submitted for publication by the time of their final oral defense.

Under Measure 10, the meeting agreed that student research presentations should be scored via rubrics (the target level being that 70% of students score about 70%). This will require some means of documentation.

Under Measure 11, the meeting agreed that the dissertation presentation measures critical thinking in addition to communication skills.

Stephen Spiro  
27 February 2007