

MSU Departmental Assessment Plan 2009-2010

Department: Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology

Department Head: John Sherwood

Assessment Coordinator: Norm Weeden

Degrees/Majors/Options Offered by Department

Assessment and Outcomes Progress 2008-2009—Department of Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology

The five areas of undergraduate instruction in the Department of Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology (PSPP) (horticulture, landscape design, plant biology, crop science and plant biotechnology) each have separate assessment plans. Over the last year progress has been made toward the implementation of each of the plans, with the most changes having been made in horticulture and landscape design as a result of feedback from students and recent faculty hires.

In 2006 those members of the department with specific interests in the horticulture and landscape design curricula met for a 2-day retreat. The undergraduate curricula for both programs were modified and a phased implementation was scheduled. This implementation is now complete, and student evaluations regarding the revised curriculum have been positive. It is felt that the new curriculum better meets the interests and needs of the students as well as more appropriately reflect the expertise of the faculty. The horticulture option has now been renamed Environmental Horticulture Science.

A change in the Plant Science option is the reinstatement of Botany (PSPP 251) as a required course and the dropping of Plant Development (PSPP 457) as requirements for the major due to faculty retirements and teaching responsibility changes. The department continues to teach the two general genetics courses on campus (BIOL 301 and PSPP 305) at the same time spring semester, allowing students to transfer from one to the other (usually from 301 to 305) as they determine which course better fits their needs.

We have continued to annually assess advising using the survey form developed previously. Analysis of the responses indicates a high degree of satisfaction with the advising the students are receiving.

Respectfully submitted,
N.F. Weeden, Chair,
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee