



2015-16 End-of-Year Report Academic Department Success Plan

Department: Earth and Environmental Sciences

Department Chair: Amos Winter

Person Primarily Responsible for Preparing this Report:
Amos Winter

Please answer the following questions in two or three pages and submit to your Dean by October 3. Your Dean will review and advance to Academic Affairs by October 10¹ and will offer you feedback by Oct. 17. This report will help inform your 2016-2019 Student Success Plan update that will be due to your Dean by Nov. 4.

1. Specific accomplishments/achievements this past year (briefly explain using bullet points, noting any changed/adapted):

Department Freshmen (1st year) Retention Goals

- > **action step 2** Environmental club is much larger than last year (10 students were enrolled last fall). There are now 20 active members and in the future enrollment should increase further.
- > **action step 3** We have arranged time blocks with Michelle Baltz-Knorr the coordinator of the Science Tutoring Center but have not yet worked out how to implement because of the increased load on EES ENVI 110 teaching assistants that tutoring would require.
- > **action step 4** This is on going well and so far we haven't found problems
- > **action step 6** EES has developed a majors only section of the Introduction to Environmental Science lab which now has a current enrollment of c. 16 students! This will provide students with an initial experience with our departmental faculty and hopefully lead to greater retention.

Department Persistence to Completion Goal(s):

- > **action step 1.** We have developed a two-year course rotation and updated degree maps. Advisors already have sufficient flexibility. Person Responsible: Department Chair, Date to be Completed: January-February, annually (achieved via department class scheduling).
- > **action step 2.** The chair has signed a number of such requests but there has been no systematic data tracking so it has been hard to assess. We will ask each advisor to keep track of changes.
- > **action step 3.** Had discussions with Math, Computer Science, Chemistry and Physics, Dean of University College and Associate Prof. Ballard about math and science cognates. The outcome of these meetings was a revised degree maps such that cognate math and science courses are completed much earlier in the degree than before. This allows for retakes and remediation earlier, if necessary. Person Responsible: Undergraduate Affairs Coordinator, Department Chair. Date to be Completed: December 2016.
- > **action step 4.** We have and keep on maintaining quality advising

¹ Note that the Dean will request a refinement to the report if it is not suitably addressing the questions.

2. Objective/Actions Not Achieved (briefly explain using bullet points):

Department Freshmen (1st year) Retention Goals

Action Steps (with dates & person(s) responsible):

- > **Action step 1.** Connecting first year majors with faculty mentors has not been implemented as we would have liked because the faculty time constraints and lack of advertising to students. >
- > **Action step 5.** Undergraduate coordinator with residential life to discuss learning community ..date for the deadline had passed and residential life indicate that the number of majors may be too small to be affective and so this hasn't been pursued.

Department Persistence to Completion Goal(s):

- > **Actions step 5.** Will not be achieved until interim grading is completed.

3. Looking ahead, briefly describe changes, additions, or subtractions that need to be made to your goals and/or action steps, including with respect to their linkage to student learning outcomes.

Action step 5. Learning community/reslife dorm floor is probably not the way to go because our numbers are too small. As we build our enrollment we will actively pursue this, but for the 2016-2017 academic year we will focus on other efforts. Faculty mentor program will be implemented in next academic year when undergraduate coordinator is not coming back from sabbatical.

EES is instituting a new committee made up of members of the Department: Enrollment and Retention Committee..One of the charges of the committee is to come up with innovative methods to improve students success.

4. Do you see opportunity for this project to work more closely with another department, college, or unit such that greater impact might be possible (briefly explain)?

See **action step 3.** We are working with other STEM departments within ISU to coordinate our efforts to improve curriculum completion specifically regarding timing of cognate courses.

See **action step 3.** We are working with Biology and Physics/Chemistry to offer tutoring for EES students at the Science Tutoring Center

We hope to work closely with ICS to improve community engagement efforts focusing on sustainability.

5. Is there anything else about your initiative you feel important to detail?

Restructuring of EES is currently moving forward. The primary motive of the restructuring plan is to streamline the curriculum and courses offered to students that will improve enrollment, retention and student success.