



MINUTES BIO/BIOT ADVISORY BOARD 04/12/23 – Microsoft Teams

DATE OF MEETING: 4/12/23

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ex-Officio: Diane Vorbroker, Summer Sparks, Dean Natavia Middleton, Kelli Stickrath (new)

Officio: Allison Williams, Barbara Biller, Travis Teuber, Steven Harper

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Linae Boehme, Shannon Ulrich, Robert Ulrich, Megan Elizabeth, Chelsea Knapp, William Bradley, Linda Gingerich, Anthony Grilli, Benjamin Skipper, Rebecca Krischer

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 4:35pm by Diane Vorbroker.

PREVIOUS MINUTES APPROVED:

Motion to approve the 11/16/22 meeting minutes was made by Travis Teuber. The motion was seconded by Steven Harper. Minutes approved unanimously by those in attendance.

OLD BUSINESS:

BIOT SKILLS CHECKLIST AND PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES: The skills checklist and program major learning outcomes (MLO) updates for BIOT that Diane Vorbroker discussed at the November meeting are now in place. The Skills checklist will help gauge how well a student has developed general lab skills and will be used to determine successful completion of the MLOs. This checklist is a fluid document that can be updated each year as needed. If you have any suggestions on the checklist, please let Dr. Vorbroker know.

BIOT-CT: A new Biotechnology Certificate has been created and approved (FL DOE CIP #0341010101). This certificate is 32 credits with 12 core courses, such as Cell Culture, Microbiology, and Biotechnology Methods I and II. All the required courses for this certificate are in the 61 credit BIOT-AS degree. The hope is to draw in more students who want something non-degree or Biology students who want to boost their hands-on skills. Dr. Vorbroker has already begun working on marketing and the college's website has been updated to list the new certificate.

NEW BUSINESS:

ENROLLMENT: Enrollment has been down college-wide and is still lower than it was pre-pandemic. However, enrollment for Biology is steady. Currently, about 2/3 of those enrolled in the program are on the Cellular and Molecular Biology track while the other 1/3 are on the Ecology, Evolution and Organismal Biology track. Enrollment for Biotechnology is low and currently is facing issues with student retention and completion. This is worrisome, but Dr. Vorbroker has hopes that with the creation of the new certificate and increased marketing will help to correct this and increase program interest.

BS BIOLOGY PROGRAM UPDATES: Linda Gingerich was unable to attend the meeting, but Dean Natavia

Middleton was in attendance and provided the committee with updates on the Baccalaureate Biology program. Dean Middleton, Dr. Gingerich, Kelli Stickrath and Linae Boehme will be having discussions over the new two weeks regarding the elective options for students in the B.S. program. Students must complete 9 credits of upper division courses to fulfill the elective requirements and are able to choose from several different courses. However, courses like Animal Science and Epidemiology are offered specifically online. It has been noticed that students are choosing these online options over courses that may be more beneficial to them. To correct this, electives will be updated by removing some options and adding new ones that better align with the degrees offered and will better prepare students for their future careers.

Dr. Gingerich just completed the state report on the Biology program last week. This is done every three years to evaluate if the students and program are meeting requirements and standards in terms of the workforce. Dr. Gingerich provided the state with this information as well as the information on graduates, salary of our students, and number of faculty that teach in the program. Additionally, Dr. Gingerich was able to provide the state this report with the help of the ETS exam result, which all B.S. Biology students are required to take. The results found that in most subcategories of the exam our students are within the top five percent of the institutions administering this exam across the state.

BIOTECHNOLOGY PROGRAM UPDATES: Dr. Vorbroker was able to take students from the program on two facility tours. These tours allowed students to see opposite ends of the spectrum, a clean room setting where you have a very controlled ISO/ GDP setting (IntelliTech) and the essential public works of a wastewater treatment plant (Clearwater Wastewater plant). The students enjoyed having the opportunity to visit both facilities, which reinforced key skills like Good Documentation Practices, aseptic technique and microbiology, and the importance of basic lab procedures using familiar lab equipment (especially in Microbiology and Chemistry). We are very thankful to both Barbara Biller and Travis Teuber for taking time to plan and disrupt their workday to have these visits take place. Hopefully these types of visits will be more frequent in the future.

Additionally, there will be seven students taking the Biotechnician Assistant Credentialing Exam (BACE) on April 13th. This is a biotechnology accreditation exam run through the University of Florida. Three of the students taking this exam are from the Associate degree program and the other four are from the Bachelor's degree program.

CAMPUS CONSOLIDATION: Over the last year the college has been figuring out how the college could consolidate property to become more efficient and increase usage of space. Due to this the College is looking to downsize. The College would still operate the Tarpon, Clearwater, Seminole and Gibbs as main campuses, as well as some ancillary sites. However, some of the College's current sites will either be sold or reverted to the county (for example veterinary technology center). Plans are a few years out but will likely include moving the Nursing program, which might require major renovations in the building that houses the upper division (B.S.) Biology and Biotech laboratories on the Clearwater campus. The College has been meeting with architects and reviewing several proposals in terms of renovations and remodeling. The potential proposals will go to the Board of Trustees in June. This will then give us a better idea of the campus changes to come.

LEADERSHIP RESTRUCTURING: Dr. Gingerich will be retiring at the end of Fall semester, and the position of Department Chairperson will be going away. The College has made the decision to remove Chair positions within departments and instead create the position of Associate and Assistant Deans. A 'lead faculty' position

will continue for Biotechnology A.S. degree and is being created for the B.S. Biology program. This position will be filled by Kelli Stickrath.

INDUSTRY UPDATES: Travis Teuber stated that on the government side there has been an ongoing issue with understaffing in labs and a decrease of laboratory technicians to hire. Barbara Biller mentioned that her company has also faced issues with hiring. She has placed job postings on Handshake multiple times for several different colleges to view and has received no applications. Barbara also stated that she had recently attended a job fair that had low attendance. Allison Williams agreed that she has also experienced these issues of finding individuals to apply to openings and filling them positions. Suggestions are welcome for better marketing, how to encourage students to apply, whether Handshake, LinkedIn or Indeed are the best ways to advertise. Direct communication to Biology and Biotechnology faculty are encouraged.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

BS BIOLOGY ELECTIVES: Elective options for students in the BS Biology program are being evaluated in order to determine options that would be more beneficial to them to help prevent students from taking options solely due to them being offered online. Once it is determined what changes are needed it will be reported on in the Fall.

AS BIOTECH RECRUITING AND MARKETING: New program and general “what is Biotechnology” marketing

CLOSING BUSINESS:

REMINDERS: Please fill out the Ways to Engage tool. <https://www.spcollege.edu/friends-partners/work-with-spc/advisory-committees/labor-market-resources>

This will allow us to gather ideas for curriculum changes, placement of students in internships, and add to the committee.

NEXT MEETING: Tentative date is either the end of October or the beginning of November 2023. A meeting invite will be sent out. If you have a preference regarding date/time, please let Diane Vorbroker know.

MEETING ADJOURNED: Meeting closed at 5:27pm by Diane Vorbroker.