



**To:** Dr. Marie Johnson, Dean College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

**From:** Dr. Sean Walker, Chair Department of Biological Science

**Date:** April 20, 2018

**Subject:** Response to Program Performance Review Report

The Department of Biological Science received the Program Performance Review Report on Monday, April 9 2018. The Department would like to thank the review committee: Drs. Phil Armstrong, Victoria Costa, Jeff Thompson, and Stuart Wooley for their time, diligence, and the constructive comments and recommendations they made in their report.

Considering the recommendations in this report and the Department's enrollments this year; the Department is faced with great resource uncertainty. The Department's Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES) has declined as a result of the waiver of B2 for Engineering, adding Anthropology to Area B2, and the reduction of four units from our required core classes in order to increase capacity in the lower division core (this change allows the Department to roughly double the number of lab sections) but reduced our FTES by approximately 50 (roughly 2.5 faculty positions). The impact of the changes in General Education (GE) has been larger, approximately 150 – 200 FTES. It is unclear if we will continue to lose FTES as a result of these changes. While the Department's FTES has decreased, the number of majors has decreased a small amount due to impaction (which is no longer in place) but is once again starting to increase. The Department currently has 1,376 majors. The largest number of majors the Department has had was 1,418 in 2013-2014. The number of majors will likely grow beyond that in 2018-2019. As the number of majors grows, we will need more funds for personnel and operating expenses because our majors take 9 – 10 units of laboratory courses. Each unit of lab generates ½ the FTES that it costs (i.e. 1 unit of lab = 2 Weighted Teaching Units) and expenses for equipment and supplies used for laboratory instruction are approximately 80% of our budget. Unfortunately given the enrollment scenario above, we will have fewer resources to serve our students, fewer resources to meet the mandates of

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GI 2025 and have even more difficulty providing high-impact practices to our students per the CSUF strategic plan

Our Department will continue to focus on student success through our advising practices, student-faculty collaborative research, and continuing and developing student support systems in our courses. Moving forward the College will be providing a new first-year experience that has been designed collaboratively by the faculty from each department in CNSM. This will hopefully increase retention and success of our first-year students in BIOL 151. We will also continue to support SI.

Our Department Personnel committee has been diligently revising the Department Personnel Document for tenured and tenure track faculty to clarify service requirements as a result of feedback from the faculty. In addition, we will continue to provide support for lecturers to develop their pedagogy and assist with portfolio and narrative construction. The Department, Department Personnel Committee, and Chair are committed to helping faculty develop professionally and aiding them to be successful in their teaching, scholarship, and service.

The Department has advocated for tuition waivers for Teaching Associates for a number of years and agrees with the recommendation of the committee. PIs do consider writing in funds to support their students. However, this is not a sustainable solution and, depending on the funding source, student support may not be allowed and many students with support from grant funds won't be teaching associates. The comments regarding 400 level courses require some context. In order to provide a diverse set of courses within the constraints set by our resources, Title 5, and University Policy, courses which include undergraduates (400 level) are taken by students in our graduate program. Per University Policy, 400 level courses require additional work when taken by graduate students for use on their study plans. Some years ago, we worked to create 400/500 level courses and were told that we could not. Title 5 and CSU policy require students to have a certain percentage of courses with primarily

graduate students enrolled. At CSUF, those are 500 level. While we would like to have additional 500 level courses for our graduate program, this would require substantial growth in the number of graduate students and faculty mentors. The Department is extraordinarily grateful for the hardworking and collegial faculty, staff and students. However, as mentioned in the PPR and in the report from the PPR committee, there is a lack of resources for equipment replacement, renovation of old instructional laboratory facilities, classrooms, and support of faculty student research. The Department would like to provide more and higher quality classroom, laboratory, student support, high impact practices, and research experiences for students but our current resources (funds and space) make that difficult and, for some practices, impossible. Our Department continues to be positive and work creatively to 'do more with less' under these circumstances in order to maintain a high-quality rigorous program. Unfortunately, I do not feel that this is sustainable or in the best interest of our students.