

**SELF-ASSESSMENT - SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES
UF MICROBIOLOGY & CELL SCIENCE**

Condition #1: *The right people apply for doctoral study.*

Condition #2: *The right applicants are admitted as doctoral students*

Condition #3: *Students and faculty form productive working relationships*

Condition #4: *Students experience social support from fellow students*

Conditions	Goals /Activities	Timeline
1	<p>Goal: We would like to see a further increase in the quality and research experience of the applicants, and we are also interested in attracting more students from the institutions that are considered to be the leaders in our field. Finally, we are working to enhance our visibility to qualified applicants in underrepresented minority groups.</p> <p>It is likely that enhancing our national visibility and connections with individual institutions, including the top schools could assist in attracting additional qualified applicants.</p> <p>Proposed activities in this area are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submitting an NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) site grant proposal to enhance visibility of our program and attract strong research-oriented students for summer research internships. We are aware that NSF-REU programs at the University of Georgia and Cal State Fullerton have been wonderfully effective as recruiting tools. Part of our proposal may include partnerships with other institutions indicated in the previous questions. 2. Cultivating relationships with minority-serving institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in an NIH Bridges to the PhD grant proposal with the Hispanic-serving institution Cal State Fullerton. • Participation in and advertising of UF graduate opportunities at the Cal State Fullerton Annual Minority Biomedical Research Conference 	<p>August 2006</p> <p>February 2006</p> <p>April 2006</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing relationships with undergraduate science programs at Florida State University • Participation in SEAGEP activities and nomination of prospective students for SEAGEP fellowships • Development of a minority-serving component in our NSF-REU proposal <p>3. Expanded graduate recruitment efforts at scientific meetings. We have been successful at the Southeastern Branch Meetings of the American Society for Microbiology (ASM) and plan to expand to the Cal State Fullerton Annual Minority Biomedical Research Conference (April 2006), the Florida Branch Meeting of the ASM in 2007, and the North Carolina Branch Meeting in 2007.</p> <p>4. Our newest graduate students have expressed interest in assisting in graduate recruitment at their undergraduate institutions. We would like to implement this project, but are limited for funds at this time.</p>	<p>Fall 2006</p> <p>Current & Throughout the Year</p> <p>April 2006 & 2007</p>
2	<p>Over the last two recruiting seasons, we have been pleased with the quality of the graduate students and their commitment to graduate research and education. In a few cases, the performance on standardized tests and overall graduate point averages have been low, but these students are being sponsored and strongly mentored by research directors who have seen research potential beyond what the numbers predict. Previously, some student attrition has resulted from admitting students who ultimately were not motivated to complete a doctoral degree. Consequently, we are trying to be very careful in assessing the students' motivation for entering graduate school.</p>	<p>January 2007</p>

	<p>There are some areas of concern. (1) This year we were less successful than last year in attracting strong applicants from outside the department. Some reasons for the decrease from last year's success rate may be limitation of recruitment funds for inviting students from outside UF and limitation in the number of College and University Fellowships offered. (2) We may also be losing both local and non-UF candidates because our stipend is less competitive than at some universities. (3) We would like to be more successful in recruiting students from underrepresented minority groups</p> <p>Proposed Activities for this area:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The department has committed several thousand dollars to resurrect the campus visitation program for non-UF students. Visitations will resume in January 2007. 2. To provide additional graduate student funding for more competitive fellowships, we are establishing integrative research relationships with other research programs on campus with the goal of writing a training grant (NSF, USDA, NIH). These relationships will take time to build, but we anticipate submitting our first proposal in 2007. We anticipate that the proposal may need to go through several rounds of submission and revision. 3. We anticipate that a successful training grant will increase our national visibility to students interested in Microbiology and Cell Science and to members of underrepresented groups, although assessment of the results will take several recruiting seasons. 4. We are also developing a relationship with the UF Genetics Institute Program to work on synergistic recruitment and training efforts 	<p>January 2007</p> <p>2007</p> <p>Ongoing since March 2006</p>
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3	<p>The productivity of student-faculty relationships varies, but these relationships are usually congenial and supportive of student development, education, and productivity. There may be occasions where student productivity with regard to measurements such as scientific accomplishment and publications may be enhanced.</p> <p>Proposed activities for this area</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Efforts are being made to reorganize the graduate curriculum to enhance student-faculty interaction through a two-semester core curriculum taught by most of the MCS faculty. Planning for these courses will begin Summer 2006. We are gradually working to improve the expectations of students with regard to scientific productivity that will be beneficial to the students in the future. 	Summer 2006
4	<p>The perception of isolation has been a difficulty for some students in the past. However, we believe the situation over the last two years has improved since our department has implemented several strategies for increasing student and graduate cohort interaction. These include extensive new student orientation, monthly group meetings with new graduate students during the first semester, weekly departmental pizza-lunch-and-graduate-student-seminar, resurrection of the “Microbiology and Cell Science Graduate Student Organization”, and student-initiated Wednesday afternoon lunch barbeques. We are also advertising UF campus-wide graduate student social and professional networking opportunities</p> <p>Proposed activities for this area:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our current graduate student leadership is exceptionally strong, and we will continue to support their student-derived efforts and facilitate graduate interactions with resources and funds for department-sponsored activities and student-invited seminar speakers. 	Ongoing

