

Memo

To: Dr. Lynette Sharp Penya
From: Dr. Josh Brokaw
cc: Dr. Tom Lee
Date: March 24, 2015
Re: Biology Degree Plan Changes

Dr. Sharp Penya,

Please convey the following requested changes/clarifications to the Biology degree plan to your colleagues on the CASAC.

We request the major revision of a major by the addition of two new tracks to the BS Biology Degree and modification of the existing Organismal Biology Track. The two new tracks are the 1) Pre-Veterinary Medicine Track and 2) Wildlife Biology Track. These tracks have been designed to complement existing programs in the Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Department in order to create greater collaboration between the departments and provide students with additional options. It should be noted that these new tracks are considered to be sufficiently dissimilar by both departments (see attached letters) to achieve the purpose of broadening the recruitment of students in these areas rather than stimulating competition for a fixed pool of recruits.

The Pre-Veterinary Medicine Track fulfills requirements for students who plan to apply for admission to a veterinary medicine program. It differs from the existing animal science-based program in its appeal to a more urban population of students through a rigorous vertebrate anatomy and physiology focus through a B.S. in biology.

The Wildlife Track differs from the existing environmental science-based program because it fulfills requirements for professional certification as an Associate Wildlife Biologist through The Wildlife Society. The certification requires a rigorous program of science and policy courses, including a minimum of 36 hours in the biological sciences. The Wildlife Society is the foremost wildlife organization in the world, and a listing as a certification program on the Wildlife Society web page (ACU is currently listed but not as a certification program.) will likely achieve substantial recruiting benefits for the cooperative wildlife programs administered by both departments. Further, due to current faculty availability at ACU (and lack thereof), it is imperative that some course in the Wildlife Biology track be offered through the Au Sable institute. These courses need to be added to the catalog.

We would also like to take this time to correct several discrepancies between the ACU catalog and course offerings from Au Sable. 1) Due to conflicting course numbers, we request that all new and existing Au Sable courses in the ACU catalog be given the BIOA prefix. 2) Titles and descriptions have been updated for the ACU catalog to match Au Sable when necessary. Because faculty at ACU do not create the titles and descriptions for Au Sable course, these have been changed by Au Sable faculty in some cases and are no longer accurately reflected in the ACU catalog. 3) Also, we have discovered that three course previously available at Au Sable no longer exist (BIOL 315 Woody Plants, BIOL 377 Marine Invertebrates, and BIOL 477 Plant Ecology); therefore, these courses must be removed from the ACU catalog.

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

Abilene, Texas 79699 • acu.edu • 325-674-2000



MEMO

5 March 2015

Dear Greg,

With this letter I am submitting the Biology Departments Pre-Veterinary Medicine Track. This prevet track is submitted with the consent and agreement with the Agriculture and Environment Department.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Lee, Jr.
Department of Biology Chair

Chair Agricultural & Environmental
Sciences

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

Abilene, Texas 79699 • acu.edu • 325-674-2000



Dear UUAC,

With this letter we support the inclusion of a Wildlife Biology track in the biology department. We sincerely believe that this tract will be complementary to the Wildlife degree plan currently offered in the Agriculture and Environment program. The Wildlife Biology (in Biology) track will establish a curriculum that adheres to the standards of the Wildlife Society. We believe this degree is complementary because it is different from (Ag and E) and students can obtain a certificate from the Wildlife Society upon completion of their ACU biology degree.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Lee, Jr. Ph. D.

Professor and Chair of Biology

Ed Brokaw Ph. D.

Professor and Chair of Agriculture and Environment

Abilene Christian University
College of Arts and Sciences
Box 29210
Abilene, Texas 79699



To: Members of College and University Academic Councils

From: Greg Straughn, Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Date: March 27, 2015

Re: Pre-Vet and Wildlife Biology Tracks

Thank you for considering the pre-vet and wildlife biology tracks in your academic council. As you know, the UUAC voted not to close the degrees in the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. This has prompted a series of very good conversations with faculty and staff in Ag about the best path forward for them in terms of faculty makeup, curriculum, program focus and what makes them distinct. I believe we can craft a degree program in Ag that will allow us to continue to draw students who are interested in aspects of livestock and ranch management, and the ways that stewardship of natural resource intersects with the land's use for animal and crop production.

In having these conversations, it has become more and more clear that providing students with a pathway to veterinary medicine that is more research-focused (similar to our existing pre-health tracks) and a wildlife track geared toward certification from the Wildlife Society is an overall advantage for recruiting. The students are distinctly different populations, and the work that Ag is doing now to reimagine its program will help clarify this to the campus, admissions, and the community at large. I believe the biology tracks you are considering will help further clarify this distinction and give my support to them. I also appreciate the work that both Dr. Brokaw and Dr. Lee have done to facilitate conversations and arrive at mutual support of these tracks. Thank you for your consideration.