



SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS  
COMMISSION ON COLLEGES

July 22, 2016

Dr. Tracy Teaff  
Chief Liaison Officer  
Texas A&M University-Central Texas  
1001 Leadership Place  
Killeen, TX 76549

Dear Dr. Teaff:

Thank you for your letter of March 3, 2016, transmitting a prospectus for the Bachelor of Science degree program in Biology, effective August 2016.

The program is consistent with the mission of the University. It fills a need for expansion into the sciences and the need to create a degree pathway model for biology students at local community colleges (Central Texas College, Temple College, and Austin Community College). Between fall 2008 and fall 2014, the number of biology majors at local community colleges increased by 79%. The addition of the biology program will also fill a need for relevancy of the institution's curricula with the region's development of a health and bioscience district and the job growth at local hospitals and medical laboratories. Data was provided documenting employment needs on the State and local level for biology graduates. Planning for the program and appropriate approvals were documented.

The 120 credit hour program will be offered using face-to-face methodology. In addition to the general education core, which students will transfer in, the program curriculum includes 64-66 required semester credit hours, six to eight semester credit hours of prescribed electives, and six semester credit hours of free electives. As part of the program, students select a concentration in biotechnology, organismal biology, or ecology/conservation. The curriculum, including requirements for each concentration, and course descriptions were provided. Faculty members scheduled to teach in the program appear appropriately qualified.

An assessment plan for the program was provided, containing a mission and vision statement for the program, goals, and student learning outcomes. A curriculum map was provided mapping courses to program goals and student outcomes. A description of the institutional planning and assessment processes was provided as well. The primary responsibility for data collection and analysis associated with the assessment of student learning rests with the faculty members. Department Chairs are key faculty in the process and oversee the assessment of student learning at the undergraduate level and works with the graduate program coordinators at the graduate level. Each program shares results of assessment through TaskStream.

Students can access learning resources onsite and electronically. The digital library is available 24/7 including web chat staffed by an OCLC QuestionPoint cooperative consortium. Subject guides to learning resources are available for each area in which the University has a program. The library provides approximately 8,000 items that are related to science, life science, or medical topics. These are videos, books, and ebooks. The library makes available approximately 22,000 science related journals in many different databases, including Science Direct, CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature), and ProQuest Biology Journals. The University participates in TexShare, allowing students to check out books from other libraries and participates in interlibrary loan services. A collection



Page 2  
Dr. Teaff  
July 22, 2016

evaluation was provided. The library has budgeted funds for the next three years to support the development of science and health related collections, including biology, nursing, life sciences, chemistry, and environmental sciences. These funds are in addition to approximately \$100,000 spent over the last four years to build these collections.

Student support services for students enrolled in the program include academic advising, academic support (tutoring and proctoring services, workshops, and study abroad scholarships), career services, counseling services, disability services, library, teaching and general purpose labs, student engagement, financial assistance, technology support services, and veteran's affairs services. Student support services are designed and administered under the leadership of the Provost and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

Physical facilities on-campus appear adequate to support the new program. Three newly constructed laboratories including two biology labs and one chemistry lab contain the necessary equipment to support the program in biology.

Financial support appears adequate. Over the next five years, the Bachelor of Science in Biology program is expected to generate 2.20 million dollars in revenue while incurring 1.99 million dollars in expenses. A detailed breakdown of the anticipated revenue and expenses over the next five years was provided.

**The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Bachelor of Science in Biology degree program. It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of the current accreditation.**

Enclosed is an invoice for \$500 to help defray the cost of review of the prospectus.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.  
President

BSW/ABC:iy

Enclosure

Cc: Dr. Marc A. Nigliazzo, President  
Dr. Crystal A. Baird