Mission Statement:
The mission of the Graduate Program of the School of Life Sciences at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) is to attain excellence in research and teaching through the creation of scientific knowledge centered on fundamental biological processes and principles, and to provide a scholarly environment in which this information is made available to undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, the scientific community and the general public. The faculty of the School of Life Sciences endeavors to accomplish this goal by providing Masters (M.S.) and Doctoral (Ph.D.) students with opportunities to acquire knowledge and experiences that enhance their critical scientific thinking, leadership skills, and understanding of the nature of science and the role that scientific knowledge plays in society.

Link Between Department’s Mission and University’s Mission:
UNLV is committed to and driven by high expectations for student learning and success. UNLV SoLS strives to accept, mentor and graduate the highest level of graduate students possible. In addition, UNLV is committed to discovery through research, scholarship, and creative activity. UNLV SoLS’ mission statement reflects this commitment with our desire to provide our graduate students opportunities to acquire and extend their scientific knowledge through both research and presentation opportunities.

Please Include all relevant documents in order to present a complete report.

Attached is a PDF of the thesis and dissertations for a sampling of students who have recently completed the necessary requirements to obtain a graduate level degree from the School of Life Sciences at UNLV.
### Outcomes Goal

**Graduate students will acquire:**

1a. Factual and methodological knowledge of the student’s selected area of specialization.

- Successfully passing comprehensive exams.

- 11 graduates successfully defended their thesis/dissertation in the 2011 academic year
- 7 of these (63%) were Ph.D. Students
- 4 of these (36%) were M.S. Students
- No measurements are being reported at this time for comprehensive exam results (plan on being reported in spring 2013 report)

1b. The ability to critically review published data and articulate knowledge in the student’s field of study.

- At this time, the faculty have not decided on how and when this objective will be assessed.

1c. Understanding of the scientific method and the relationship among theory, experimentation, data analysis and interpretation, and the importance of generating and disseminating new scientific knowledge.

- Journal article publications
- Graduate student presentations at local, national and international meetings

- UNLV SoLS senior graduate students published 6 articles in the 2011 academic year.
- **Neiswenter, S. A.,** and B. R. Riddle *in press.* Landscape and climatic effects on the
School of Life Sciences Graduate Programs Assessment Report 2012

**Objective 2.** Students who graduate with a Master’s of Science in Life Sciences will have fulfilled their professional goals, and will be competitive for admission into doctoral (Ph.D.) programs or professional schools, or for entry-level career positions in industry or in governmental or non-governmental organizations.

- Evidenced by where students have obtained positions after their graduate work at UNLV SoLS.

- 10 out of 11 students to graduate in the 2011 academic year are successfully employed or pursuing further educational ventures.

- Ph.D. Graduates: 100% are currently employed.
  - 5 of 7 (71%) are engaged in Post-Doctoral research in a variety of positions world wide.
  - 1 of 7 is currently employed as a laboratory coordinator at a university
  - 1 of 7 has a position as a teacher in the state of Texas.

- M.S. Graduates: 75% are currently employed or pursuing postgraduate education.
  - 1 of 4 is currently attending medical school at Howard University College of Medicine
  - 1 of 4 is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at the Oregon Health Sciences University
  - 1 of 4 is employed with the American Eagle Research Institute

**Objective 3.** The School of Life Sciences will maintain its high quality and standards of graduate education at

- Student awards and recognition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPSA Awards Spring 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elana Paladino - Honorable Mention, Science &amp; Engineering oral presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren Reynolds - First Place, S&amp;E poster presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Webber - First Place, S&amp;E oral presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
or above nationally recognized levels, and will continue to provide innovative and modern educational and research programs for our Master’s and Ph.D. students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mallory Eckstut - GPSA Merit Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Awards: Tereza Jezkova (former graduate student) received the A. Brazier Howell Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School of Life Sciences Graduate Programs Assessment Report 2012
## School of Life Sciences Graduate Programs Assessment Report 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes Goal</th>
<th>Instruments/Measures and Timetable</th>
<th>Results, Analysis, and Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students will examine their biases and preconceptions around diversity issues, will expand their world-view, and will engage in social action and service. | - Student self-report on senior survey: 80% or more will positively endorse (e.g., 5 or above on 7 pt. scale) statements about growth of knowledge of ethics, awareness of diversity and social justice issues, motivation for social action/service; Mean value 5 or above.  
- Percentage of seniors reporting engaging in service learning, taking a course emphasizing one of above areas, or participating in a study abroad experience relevant to psychology. Goal: 80% | - Ethics = 76.9%; Mean = 5.39  
Diversity =76.9; Mean = 5.5  
Social Justice = 84.6; Mean = 5.85  
Social action/service = 92.3; Mean = 6.19  
Course on Ethics in Psychology was added to the curriculum. Faculty will continue to emphasize ethical, diversity, social justice, and social action issues in curriculum and in individual classes.  
65% (17 of 26) reported accomplishing one or more of these in the senior survey.  
Two civic service courses have been added to the 2011-2013 catalogue. |

See sample rubrics provided and the following website for additional rubrics for a variety of disciplines and assessment measures (e.g., critical thinking, writing, case studies, class discussion, cultural literacy, lab reports, ethics, and more):

http://openedpractices.org/resources
http://www.winona.edu/AIR/rubrics.htm