AS-T in Life Sciences Academic Program Prioritization - 2014

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| **Criterion 10: Opportunity Analysis of the Program**This criterion is meant to encourage innovative suggestions that have not previously been considered by the institution. This criterion gives each program the opportunity to explain how it could be improved and what resources or opportunities would allow that to happen. |
| 1. In **500 words** or less describe how the program could be enhanced or strengthened.
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| As noted in criterion 9, the program could be enhanced by connecting it more strongly to other programming at the college, either in the health fields or with the BSNES. It is interesting to note that the enrollment in the AST Life Sciences (i.e., number of declared students) has been steadily increasing over the past four years. This has been, to my knowledge, without any recruitment or advertising efforts. I am not aware of any faculty member who advocates that students declare the AST in Life Sciences. If there were a clear ladder for students that could become part of a recruiting plan. Another related area to explore is the connection the NWIC Center for Health. AST in Life Sciences students could become part of the work of the Center for Health and the center for Health could promote the AST in Life Sciences. |
| 1. In **500 words** or less describe how this program is prepared to transform in new and innovative ways.
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| At present, there is little or no effort being exerted to strengthen and promote the AST in Life Sciences. It will require several groups to clarify the role of this program and include it in a development plan. These groups include the Science Department/science faculty, the Center for Health, and potentially NICMERE. |
| 1. In **500 words** or less describe the future outlook of the program?
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| Unless the administration and science department decides to address the disconnect between the existing AST in Life Sciences and the core college programming, particularly the bachelor programs, the AST in Life Sciences has an uncertain future. It has never lived up to its potential as a strong preparation for advanced work in the biological, environmental, and life sciences because students were not prepared to pursue such a demanding course of study. If, on the other hand, the program were assessed to determine where it fits in the future goals for the college and the necessary preparatory course work and advising were put into place, then it could play a stronger role in supporting self-determination for tribal communities. |