

Data-based decisions for 2015 – PhD and MS

We gathered information and used it to make decisions that will improve our graduate program in NDFS in the following ways:

- We developed grad faculty requirements in response to requests from the grad school and to ensure that students receive quality mentorship and guidance. The procedure was to interview some faculty that would clearly meet the requirements for becoming graduate faculty and considering other departments at USU and sister institutions requirements for graduate faculty.
- This past year we instituted reduced credit requirements for graduate degrees in NDFS. Data was gathered beginning in 2014 from sister institutions including: North Carolina State, Washington State and Idaho State Universities. We found that our credit requirements were restrictive compared to other programs.
- NDFS graduate faculties were awarded a Utah State University Office of Research and Graduate Studies Graduate Student Recruitment Grant in 2015 to improve quality and diversity of food science graduate students at Utah State University. Much of the grant went to the Food Science Student Club to spend many hours looking at web sites and other ideas used by sister universities for recruiting food science and nutrition students. This study led to suggested changes in our web site to make it more user friendly and appealing to a wider diversity of students.
- Our faculty members continually scrutinize the IDEA evaluations for their classes to improve teaching for both undergraduate and graduate students. This past year, our department's teaching evaluations were among the highest at the university. We were awarded \$25,000 from the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences for our teaching success. This money will be used in ways that improve teaching in the dept.