EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE – 2015/2016
Students graduating in the Watershed and Earth Systems, Physical Geography, or Fisheries and Aquatic Science majors in the Department of Watershed Sciences

Major:  
A. Watershed and Earth Systems  
B. Watershed Sciences  
C. Watershed Science and Earth Systems  
D. Watershed and Earth Systems  
E. Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences  
F. FAAS

Minor:  
A. n/a  
B. n/a  
C. Geology  
D. Fisheries Science, and Geographic Information Science  
E. n/a  
F. n/a

Emphasis:  
A. n/a  
B. n/a  
C. n/a  
D. Hydrology Management  
E. n/a  
F. n/a

Advisor:  
A. Patrick Belmont  
B. Patrick Belmont  
C. Patrick Belmont  
D. Patrick Belmont  
E. Wayne Wurtsbaugh  
F. Wayne Wurtsbaugh

First registered at USU?
A. Fall 2012  
B. Fall 2009  
C. Fall 2013  
D. Fall 2012  
E. Fall 2012  
F. Fall 2014

Transfer student?
A. Yes  From where? Weber State University  
B. n/a  
C. Yes, LDS Business College  
D. Yes, LDS Business College  
E. Yes, DLIFLC (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, US Army)  
F. USU Eastern
1. Strengths and weaknesses of departmental courses required for your degree.

A. Strengths: Very smart and experienced instructors. Enjoyable and informative field trips and labs. Small class size.

Weaknesses: I had trouble seeing the benefits of advanced chemistry and physics. The direct elective strategy was difficult to figure out because some of the courses weren’t offered and many had difficult scheduling issues.

B. Strengths: GIS courses were great and should be kept in future curriculum. I feel like I learned from a diversity of perspectives and was able to sufficiently explore many facets of water management. I came in to the program with an interest and have left with a direction and a passion. I feel this is because of the courses I took and the amazing faculty here.

Weaknesses: I was refused enrollment in the Riparian Ecology and Management course, which I really wanted to take. I was told it was a graduate level only course, but it is offered as an elective for the major.

C. There is a lot of overlap between classes, I find this to be a strength because it reinforces topics and shows the interconnectedness between topics in watershed science. Remote sensing and GIS lectures are SUPER boring and dry but the labs are engaging and interesting.

D. Strengths:
   - The freedom that was given to choose what electives you would like to shape myself into what kind of skills I would like to graduate with. I liked it now being regimented to only particular classes.
   - I also liked most of the professors and found that they are always willing to counsel with you about current work or future decisions.
   - I felt like I was welcomed in and part of a family being an undergraduate of this major. I also liked being able to take classes with graduate students that were friendly and added insights for my decisions.

Weaknesses:
   - Class Conflicts and Registration: I had difficulties making sure that all of my classes were squared away almost every semester. I needed to get special signatures and permissions just about every semester, I felt like it could have been smoother. I would also like to think that there should be more pre-requisites for classes but it might impede with graduating on time due to class schedule conflicts.
   - Preparing me for after graduation: One thing that I loved about the time that I was a fisheries major was that I was able to speak and meet with local biologists and professors that spoke about what I needed to do during college(summer field work) and what would be good career paths. I got into watershed and earth systems and there is nothing like that for career paths. I have no real idea what to expect career wise besides what I learned in Fisheries. I feel like this department prepares well for graduate school after a bachelors, but lacks informing students on career options. Other students that I have spoken with have wanted to take a break working in the field to make sure that they want to go to graduate school or just want to work after they graduate. I would have loved an after career watershed science workshop stating options and career paths.

E. Strengths: All required courses seemed relevant to the major and most were enjoyable.

Weaknesses: WATS courses seemed to be unevenly distributed between Fall and Spring semesters.
F. All of the WATS courses have been great! The professors are challenging and particularly enjoyed classes from Belmont, Schmidt, Budy and Dr. Miller.

2. Which WILD, ENVS, or WATS course(s) most informed you about natural resources and environmental management?

A. WATS 4530 Water Quality and Pollution (Mesner), WATS 4310 Wetland Ecology and Management (Kettenring)

B. Water quality and pollution, Large river management, Fluvial geomorphology, Wetland Ecology

C. ENVS 4000-loved that class

D. WATS 5330 Large River Management, WATS 4650 Principles of Fishery Management, WATS 4310 Wetland Ecology and Management

E. Fish Diversity and Conservation, Water Quality and Pollution

F. Water Quality and Pollution from Nancy Mesner was the most applicable for large scale management in my field of study.

3. What courses should the department drop from its course offerings? Why?

A. I didn’t find Applied Remote Sensing WILD5750 very helpful in my experience. It was a good enough class, but I feel like it was specializing in a different field than I cared about.

B. Remote sensing of land surfaces. It seems like a repeat of applied remote sensing (WILD 5750).

C. This is an ENVS course but it is directly applicable to the WATS department; Water Law and Policy, ENVS 6320. It has a joint format with the Wetland Ecology class taught by Karin Kettenring and the water law portion of the class can get diluted in wetland issues.

D. I would say climate change because you learn enough about it in small watershed hydrology to know about it.

E. None

F. No comment.

4. What new courses would you like to see offered?

A. I really wanted to learn about groundwater and it seemed like it was only skimmed over in some of my classes. So, a class like that may be beneficial to some. I also would have enjoyed a management specific course focused on what natural resource managers do.
B. I feel like environmental toxicology was a good course and helped expand my knowledge on aquatic and other environmental contaminants. If a water quality focus option is applied in the future, this course should be considered as an elective.

I would like to see a full semester aquatic modeling class perhaps focusing on 2-3 models that are commonly used in water resources management. It seems like a lot of jobs use modeling and I don’t feel like I got much modeling experience. I did modeling in small watershed hydrology, but it was more of a whirlwind introduction and didn’t get a lot of time to get into it.

Maybe a Utah or western specific water management class would be interesting. Most of the courses already have the western focus, but an “arid lands water management” class could be developed.

C. No response

D. The courses that I would like to see offered would be a class that specifically focusses on HEC- HMS and Groundwater modeling programs. I felt like I had a brush over them but nothing that I would be able to go to a future employer and say that I feel confident with the software. I would like to see Water law, toxicology, or groundwater offered emphasized more. I really wanted to take the Riparian Ecology and Management course that is listed but not offered.

E. Fish Physiology, Fisheries Problem Solving, Culture of Aquatic organisms, AIS Ecology

F. Fish courses could be expanded such as physiology or a “technical skills” course would be helpful

5. Strengths and weaknesses of advising procedures. Did you meet regularly with your advisor? Were you aware of curriculum changes and scheduling conflicts? If not, why not?

A. I tried to communicate with my advisor once a semester to make sure I was on track. I mostly figured scheduling problems and curriculum changes through online registration on my own. A proposed plan or suggested schedule would have helped me to take classes in a more constructive order. (Easier classes in early semesters and more difficult ones later on).

B. I met regularly with my advisors and was aware of changes and scheduling conflicts. Patrick, Shelly and Mykel were all very helpful. The Degree Works software was also very helpful.

C. I made sure to meet with Patrick about advising at least once a semester.

D.
- Advising: I also felt like there could have been some more pro-activeness like an email from my department advisor letting me know that if I have any questions he would be there to answer them.
  - I feel like an advisor should be more than just approving classes but to give some real advice for students in their career path. I didn’t find this to be the case besides with Mykel is general terms, I didn’t have much time with Shelly though.
- I met with Mykel and Shelly every semester but I could have met with Patrick more often.
- I was aware of all of the curriculum changes and schedule conflicts because I was informed by Mykel or Shelly or covered my own bases.
- I felt like I was left on my own to work it all out most of the time.
E. No weaknesses. I met with Wayne two time. Yes, I was aware of changes because Wayne was good at keeping us posted via email.

F. I did not meet with the advisor much. However, that is because the requirements were clear and I was self-motivated.

6. Were departmental staff helpful? Please explain.

A. I found them to be helpful when I sought help. I didn’t always get the same answers from everyone in regards to degree requirements, but everyone was willing to help.

B. Most were very helpful and accommodating to my learning experience. Many professors have invested time and effort into my student success. A lot of my opportunities came from departmental staff and professors extending a hand up.

C. Yes! Brian and Enid were always very helpful. They always knew the answer the my questions and they’re very approachable.

D. I found that the department staff was very helpful in answering questions that I had and I will definitely consider some as lifelong friends. I found all of them to be prompt in responding to my questions. I feel like there is good networking throughout the department but not to outside nonacademic companies and people.

E. Not very much interaction.

F. Every member of the staff have been exemplary in all the offices (professors, business center and otherwise)

7. Was the College’s Academic Services Center helpful? Please explain.

A. I never used it; I’m sure it would have been.

B. Not sure what this is. If this is the tutoring services than I never utilized them.

C. Yes. Mykel knew the ins and outs of the advising system, she was familiar with classes and professors, and most importantly she always asked about non-scholastic aspects of my life, i.e. roommates, family life, job searches, overall well-being. I really appreciated this because it showed that she cared and the college cared. SUPER IMPORTANT.

D. No response

E. Yes. Both Mykel and Shelly were very helpful. Quick to respond to emails and provided valuable advice.

F. They have always been great too.

8. Were you active in student groups such as the AFS student chapters? Was this a valuable experience?

A. I was in my first semester, but didn’t find it to be beneficial.
B. I was active in SOSNR. It was semi-helpful. I felt a bit more involved in the college, but, probably due to my own lack of effort, didn’t get much out of it.

C. Yes, student council. Being on council helped me meet new students and interact with the faculty and community more. I felt incorporated in the QCNR community.

D. Yes I was an active student in AFS I was an officer one year and attended many meetings and activities. I found it to be very useful not only for information and fun but networking and career planning as well. Want something like this for hydrology students as well not just fish related!

E. AFS. Yes, I had the opportunity to present research at a professional meeting and got to do other fun fish related things.

F. VP of USU AFS and otherwise active. It has been a great opportunity to meet with other friends, participate in professional conferences, and of course, go fishing.

9. Did you find employment within the College? If so, was it helpful in your educational program?

A. I was offered summer opportunities after asking professors, but did not take them. Both opportunities were part time field work with unpredictable schedules. I did field work outside of the college. I didn’t realize how beneficial it would have been to work within the college until my last year of school.

B. Yes and yes. My experience in departmental labs and the WQE has been invaluable.

C. Yes. The valuable tech skills I’ve learned directly apply to my major and interests. Working the Belmont lab has: given me amazing insight into what it takes to be a grad student and grad student life, connected me to faculty and staff, directly influenced my decision to further my education, and gave me a starting point for undergraduate research.

D. I found employment many years in the college and am very appreciative of it because I have skills that will help me to find work in the future.

E. Yes. Phaedra Budy’s Fish Ecology Lab. Very helpful.

F. Budy’s Fish Ecology Lab – Senior Undergraduate technician. This was probably the most beneficial factor in my education as it added the opportunity for professional development in the form of employment in the Arctic for two summers as well as a multitude of other applicable research and methods.

10. Any other observations or comments on your experience in the Department of Watershed Sciences, and as a major in Fisheries and Wildlife, Watershed and Earth Systems or Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences? Please be specific in comments about courses/advisors/professors/students/policies etc.

A. Something that would have helped me would have been some kind of connection of the course work I have done and the professional world. I am just finding how under qualified I am for the professional goals that I have. I think incorporating professional expectations into the courses would have benefited me in career preparation.
B. Great program with amazing faculty. I wish there were more students!

C. The Watershed Science and Earth Systems major is really open to person tailoring. I chose the major because of this reason but it can be difficult to know what electives to take. I might be helpful to create some more emphasis/minor tracts to reduce floundering and ensure that students maximize their time in the program.

D. I felt like I had a really good experience and I am happy with the people that I have made friendships with. I have found that everyone is really helpful whenever I had questions. Again the only thing that I would have liked would be to change those few classes and then a session talking about options for careers and school.

E. No response

F. It is difficult to imagine that there could be a large improvement to a program that has been so immensely comprehensive and transformative. Everyone that I have interacted with throughout my education has been helpful and professional. I feel that some professors deserve recognition:

Dr. Phaedra Budy has been the most influential teacher/mentor that I have ever met and cannot express just how much gratitude I have for her guidance.

Dr. Scott Miller and Joe Kotynek – Freshwater Invertebrates course was the most comprehensive and well taught aquatic ecology course I have taken.

Dr. Jack Schmidt and Dr. Peter Wilcock – Fluvial Geomorphology was incredibly challenging and the lab section was exceptionally memorable.

Dr. Michael King (USU Eastern) is the individual that sparked my interest in natural resources and played a large role in the events that led me to USU main campus.

11. Expected Cumulative GPA at graduation?
   A. 2.65
   B. 3.4
   C. 3.5
   D. 3.4
   E. 3.1/3.2
   F. 3.87

12. Will you be employed after graduation?
   A. Yes
   B. Yes
   C. Yes
   D. No response
   E. No
   F. Yes

13. Employer?
   A. Local Store, In State
   B. USU Water Quality Extension, In State
14. **Relationship of employment to education?**
   A. Unrelated
   B. Related
   C. Related
   D. No response
   E. No response
   F. Related

15. **Type of employment?**
   A. Part-time, Nature of position: The Job I have had while in school
   B. Part-time, Programs assistant
   C. Part-time, Lab technician
   D. No response
   E. No response
   F. Internship – Seasonal, Conservation and Research

16. **Are you continuing your education? Where?**
   A. No
   B. Yes, Undecided, MS, Water Resources Management/Environmental Pollution
   C. Yes, Undecided, MS, Possibly geomorphology
   D. Yes, Planning to attend graduate school in 2017, MS, Hydrology
   E. Yes/No, Undecided, MS
   F. Yes, Next Year? MS, Aquatic Ecology

17. **Unemployed (actively seeking employment) □NO**
    **Unemployed (not seeking employment) □NO**

18. **Any other comments about your experience in the Department, the College, or University.**
   A. This degree was very enjoyable. I loved my classes within the department. Some of the elective courses were probably unnecessary for me but I can see why they are part of this degree. Thanks to all who helped me accomplish this challenging experience.
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B. No response.

C. I will still be taking classes after commencement. I answered questions 12-15 according. Why is the QCNR so great?

D. No response.

E. No response.

F. No response.