

## ASSESSMENT WEBSITE INFORMATION

College: Sciences and Mathematics  
Chair/Director: Malathi Srivatsan

Degree Program: Molecular Biosciences Ph.D.  
2013 Report

### DATA SAY:

College of Sciences and Math as well as ABI have been inviting scientists/researchers to come to ASU and present seminars to share their findings. MBS students had been attending these seminars without understanding the science that was discussed and were not participating in discussions with the seminar speakers. They were losing out on these wonderful opportunities, and it was a concern for us.

### SO WHAT:

Scientific research is becoming more and more interdisciplinary. Scientists have to come out of their comfort zone of their own areas of expertise and learn new fields and new developments in their own fields. Actively participating in scientific seminars and discussing the research with seminar presenters help very much in these efforts and also help to gain new knowledge and establish collaborations. As we train future scientists in our MBS Ph.D. program, it is absolutely necessary to train our students to develop seminar participation skills.

### HOW WE CHANGED:

On 07/18/2012 and again on 12/12/2012, I had a meeting with all the MBS students and put forth the idea of having a one hour discussion a few days before each seminar on the, or related to the seminar topic by reading related research papers from journals. I suggested one or two students should lead the discussion each week and I would be at each of those discussion meetings to help in the discussion. Some students were very enthusiastic as they immediately saw the gain, and other students saw it as added burden on their time. We decided to give it a try anyway.

### WHAT WE GOT:

Beginning January of 2013, we have been having seminar discussions for each seminar. Even those students who opposed the idea now have started welcoming it since they realize how these discussions are helping them to understand the seminars and have a good intellectual discussion with the seminar speakers.

