Program: Integrative Physiology Ph.D. Program and Exercise Science M.S. Program
Rating:  Additional Evaluation Required

The Exercise Science (Athletic Training) MS program seems similar to a professional degree program rather than a research-based MS program. Although the program is in high demand, the size is limited by available funding. In fall 2008, 8 students were enrolled in the MS. It is essential for these students to be actively involved in the clinical and administrative aspects related to athletic training and the resources for those experiences are very limited. Very limited information was provided for this program which seems to constitute roughly half the graduate students in the department.

The Ph.D. graduate program in Integrative Physiology had a total enrollment of 6 students in Fall '08. Small faculty size and a relatively large undergraduate major limit the growth of the graduate program and its ability to offer sufficient graduate offerings. There also seems to be a lack of stable RA funding for graduate students. The median TTD is 5.0 yr but only 38% of the doctoral students enrolled between 1996-2001 graduated. 19% left with a master's. Although 100% of the 6 PhD. graduates from the program between 2003-08 found placement in academic institutions, which ranks them above other PhD programs in the biomedical sciences, this is a small number of graduates and most placements were not at research intensive institutions comparable with the University of Iowa. As noted in the program's own assessment, the program could benefit from merging and restructuring with other related programs. Considering the research interests of the faculty, another possibility where overlap exists would be with Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science in the Carver College of Medicine. The program response indicates that the department is proactively exploring restructuring opportunities to improve the viability of the graduate program. The Task Force recommends further evaluation.