

ORL-EE&P-02**Fisheries and Aquaculture Higher Education in Nepal**

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Fisheries higher education plays a vital role in the development of aquaculture and fisheries by producing specialized and skilled manpower. This paper depicts the current status of fisheries higher education at the Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU) and Tribhuvan University (TU), focusing on academic program, curriculum, examination and evaluation systems, student enrolment trend, graduate employment opportunities, challenges and ways to improve fisheries higher education system in Nepal.

Agriculture and Forestry University offers B.Sc. Fisheries, M.Sc. Fisheries and PhD in Aquaculture while TU offers only M.Sc. Aquaculture degree program with 36 credit requirements (30 credit course work and 6 credit research). B.Sc. Fisheries is a 4-year (8 semesters) degree program catered only by AFU in Nepal. Students are required to complete 165 credit courses out of which 130 credits are fisheries related courses from sustainable aquaculture, aquatic resources management, fisheries postharvest technology and fisheries social science whereas 35 credits are from agriculture, animal science and veterinary science, and social science. They take Entrepreneurial Learning Experience in the 8th semester which is the hands-on training/internship program of 20 credits. M.Sc. Fisheries is a 2-year (4 semesters) degree program offered in Aquaculture and Aquatic Resources. Students are required to complete a minimum of 45 credits out of which 30 credits are course work and 15 credits are research work. PhD is offered in Aquaculture and this is a 3-year (6 semesters) program. Students are required to complete 60 credits. Minimum CGPA required to get a master degree is 2.5 and to get a PhD degree is 3.0. Final Board examination is conducted at the end of each semester by the Controller of Examinations. Until now 141 students have graduated from the AFU at different academic programs. Majority of graduates have chosen to pursue advanced degrees followed by government jobs and private sectors such as feed industries.

Despite updating the curriculum time to time and availability of infrastructure, qualified faculty members and diverse employment opportunities, student's enrolment is decreasing. There is a need to enhance collaboration between academia, industry, and policymakers, to improve the effectiveness of fisheries education.

