

Anthropology Department-PSU- Assessment – April 17, 2019

A. History

The Anthropology Department has engaged in the formal assessment of student learning since 1999. At that time, then-Chair Marc Feldsman and faculty member Michele Gamburd developed the structure and process that the Department continues to use. We strove to create the easiest, most efficient, and least intrusive procedure possible. We first implemented our assessment plan in 2002-2003 and have engaged in assessments during all subsequent academic years. The initial process pertained to the undergraduate curriculum. In 2008, we extended the assessment process to encompass the graduate curriculum as well.

B. Assessment Plan

Our assessment process is as follows. For our undergraduate and graduate curriculum, we have developed learning goals (see Appendix V.1, V.2). The overall categories of our goals are the same for our undergraduate and graduate programs, but the graduate program criteria are more advanced. Faculty include information about these goals on their syllabi and in their course assignments.

Each yearly assessment meeting deals with only one level of our program (undergraduate or graduate). At our fall retreat, we decide which level of the program and which learning goal we will assess. We then select two courses for which the designated faculty members gather course portfolios that include faculty materials and student work samples. Each portfolio includes the following faculty materials: the syllabus, all assignments, and the grade curve from the assignment for which student work has been collected. The portfolio also includes five student work samples (essays, term papers, lab assignments, research proposals, or similar student products) chosen in this way: the highest grade, the lowest A, the lowest B, the lowest C, and the lowest grade. This stratified sample provides a wide range of student work. Faculty members collect copies of the chosen materials, making sure that student names are removed from the samples.

At our yearly assessment meeting in the spring, we review the undergraduate or graduate learning goals and corresponding curriculum map (see Appendix V.3 and V.4). The curriculum map is a table on which we list our learning goals across the top and course numbers down the side. For each course in the matrix, instructional faculty indicate whether the specific goal is introduced (indicated by an 'I'), reinforced (indicated by an 'R'), or mastered (indicated by an 'M'). Faculty also indicate whether they assess student learning for that goal in the course (indicated by an 'A'). The faculty then discuss the learning goals and evaluate whether we could make improvements in the level at which material is covered (I, R, or M) and the distribution of how materials are covered in the curriculum. These discussions often result in improvements to our learning goals and modifications to courses in our curriculum (even courses not being assessed that year). The mapping process allows us to visualize how we scaffold learning throughout the curriculum, with the aim of assuring that students who complete our program reliably master the knowledge and skills we strive to impart.

After reviewing our learning goals and curriculum map, we turn to the course portfolios. We use a rubric developed to fit the particular goal (see Appendix V.5, for an example). The rubric asks that the evaluator look at both the faculty materials (syllabus, assignments) and the student materials, including

the five student work samples (qualitative evidence of student progress) and the instructor's grade curve for that assignment (which indicates roughly how many students wrote papers similar to the ones in the sample and provides a quantitative element to the assessment). Evaluation is done on a four-point scale (excellent, good, needs work, or no basis to judge). In general, we spend relatively little time filling in the rubrics and a great deal of time discussing the structure and content of the course, what did and did not work in the assignments, and possible modifications to the course. These discussions are fun, supportive, informative, constructive, and productive of changes in our curriculum.

Each year we craft an assessment report (see Appendix V.6, for an example). These reports capture the main elements of our discussion and document our plans for future meetings. Our learning goals, curriculum maps, rubrics, and assessment reports are available on [our website's department information page](#).

1. Evidence of Student Learning

Full text of the departmental goals for our [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) curriculum is available online and in Appendices V.1 and V.2. Both sets of goals include four main elements, some of which have sub-elements.

1. Communication
 - a. Writing
 - b. Numeracy
 - c. Oral, visual, and video presentation
 - d. Ethics
2. Critical thinking
3. Professional competence and conduct
4. Research
 - a. Library research and information literacy skills
 - b. Research design and methodology
 - c. Research ethics

The graduate goals require more elaborate work and more sophisticated mastery of skills and competencies; in other words, the "small print" for the two sets of goal levels differ. For example, the undergraduate "professional competence" goal consists of a short paragraph, whereas the text for the graduate goal takes up a half a page and consists of five sub-elements.

The Anthropology Department's undergraduate goals share two key elements with the PSU Campus Wide Learning Outcomes. Our first two goals, communication and critical thinking, are also on the University's list. We do not explicitly include the other two university goals, which are 'ethics and social responsibility' and 'diversity, equity, and social justice.' We do, however, address those two University goals in various ways. We cover issues of ethics in our communication goal and our research goal. We feel that anthropology as a discipline focuses primarily on understanding human biological and cultural diversity through time and space, thus we rigorously cover issues of diversity. In addition, our program features a strong applied element and students study and practice engaged, applied anthropology with a critical understanding of social responsibility. A student majoring in our program has many

opportunities to investigate human biological and cultural diversity and to understand issues of social justice. In these ways, our undergraduate goals dovetail with all of PSU's Campus Wide Learning Outcomes.

2. Curriculum Experiences/activities Designed to Meet Learning Outcomes

Through their class activities, students in anthropology courses at PSU gain experience (as evidenced in their work samples) to meet our learning goals. For example, instructors regularly assess students' abilities to meet our communication goal by assigning students exercises to write essays; craft tables, charts, graphs, and maps; and make oral, visual, and video presentations. Instructors also assess these "communication" materials for evidence of critical thinking and inquiry. To demonstrate their competence in research, undergraduate and graduate students are required to engage in anthropological projects. Undergraduates must take at least one research methods course to fulfill their degree requirements, and graduate students must craft and implement a research project, as illustrated in their thesis proposal and thesis. All of these endeavors give students hands-on experience in ethically engaging with human subjects, archaeological collections, and/or non-human primates. The degrees of professional competence vary, with graduate students required to demonstrate a broader range of skills, given that their projects require original work and independent initiative.

3. Evaluation of Student Academic Performance

As mentioned above, when we first designed our assessment plan, we strove to create the easiest, most efficient, least intrusive procedure possible. Our data for assessment is drawn directly from existing faculty documents and student work samples. Through our assessment activities, we aim not to repeat but to build upon the instruction and feedback that faculty provide. For example, we use the grade curve for the assignment from which student work samples are drawn as a quantitative indication of 'how many students wrote papers like these.' By proxy, assessment of the stratified sample stands for assessment of all of the students in the course. Bringing faculty and student products to the table for discussion provides the opportunity for faculty members to learn from colleagues and calibrate their instruction accordingly. Our conversations promote quality control and curricular coherence while honoring time-tested processes and standards of grading (i.e., measuring, evaluating, and assessing) student work.

Our learning goals consist of high-level, generalizable ideals that we operationalize differently in different courses. During our yearly assessment meetings, faculty gather to collectively review syllabi for content, rigor, and breadth. We also review and compare assignments to evaluate whether they are appropriate for the course level. For example, during the review of a 300-level course we suggested that an instructor might include additional elements of critical thinking in the final exam for future instantiations of the course; increasing the level of student output in this course would offer more appropriate preparation for 400-level courses. During our discussion of course portfolios and curriculum maps, we examine and adjust the scaffolding of assignments throughout the curriculum.

4. Analysis of the Results of Assessing Student Academic Performance

The Anthropology Department faculty meet yearly to perform assessment activities and discuss changes to our curriculum. As noted above, each year we choose a goal in the fall, gather student work samples

throughout the year, and discuss the materials at a meeting in the spring. Reports of our assessment meetings dating back to 2004 are available on our [Departmental Information webpage](#).

The faculty are reasonably satisfied with the current assessment plan (detailed above). The current process may not generate great quantities of data (particularly quantitative data), but it does provide a sustainable forum for us to engage in regular, meaningful discussions about our curriculum.

Our website (<https://www.pdx.edu/anthropology/departmental-assessment>) provides assessment reports for 13 years. Each year we assessed two courses, drawing on (in most cases) five work samples per course. This totals $2 \times 5 \times 13 = 130$ students assessed directly. For each course, the qualitative data provided by the work samples was complemented by quantitative data provided by the instructor's grade curve for the assignment being assessed. Courses ranged in size from fifteen to one hundred. We have not recorded information regarding enrollment in each course assessed. Guestimating an average of 35 students per assessed course, the 130 student work samples assessed directly provide a proxy for the work of **910** ($2 \times 35 \times 13$) students represented by the instructors' grade curve.

5. Post-graduate Outcomes for the Program

The Anthropology Department firmly believes that it is more important to teach students how to learn rather than teach them particular facts or figures. Thus, our program goals focus on key competencies and skills, such as critical thinking, communication, professional competence, and research. In addition, our program focuses on applied anthropology, offering students instruction and experience in how to use anthropological theory and methods to accomplish goals in conversation with community and government partners. If we have succeeded in honing students' abilities in these crucial areas, then we have prepared them the best we can to pursue further graduate education or to use their undergraduate and graduate degrees in "the real world."

The Anthropology Department has not created a mechanism to track where our undergraduates "end up". We do however have detailed knowledge about most of our graduate students. Of the 48 students who earned MA/MS degrees in our program between 2008 and 2018, all but 10% work in settings that use their anthropological knowledge. Most of our students are employed in consulting companies (largely related to cultural resources management); the next highest ranked employer type is state-federal agencies. Others work in university/college teaching and research, for tribes. Five are pursuing their PhDs.

6. Incorporate Changes Based on Assessment Evidence of Student Learning Outcomes

Yearly assessment meetings provide the opportunity for faculty members to read and comment on each other's syllabi and assignments. This form of learning can prove fruitful. For example, one faculty member entirely revamped the format for her graduate Core seminar based on feedback received from a faculty member in another subfield; the resulting course proved no less rigorous but much more user-friendly for students. In another example, while discussing the need to promote more student practice in library research, one faculty member noted that she did not provide permanent links on D2L (Desire 2 Learn, PSU's learning management system) to articles in the university library's database; instead, she taught students how to find the articles themselves. Other faculty have since adopted this practice and feel that the experience gives students a better understanding of how to use online resources at the

library. These examples show how our assessment activities have improved classroom instruction and student learning.

7. Provide examples on ways the program has used assessment findings to review, evaluate, and modify the curriculum.

Conversations in assessment meetings assist in curricular revisions. For example, discussion around the research goal resulted in a change to the graduate curriculum. A conversation about graduate student proposals led to a modification of how and when we form students' thesis committees and how and when committee members provide feedback on proposals. Initially we merely had all tenure-related faculty comment on student proposals. During an assessment meeting that touched on graduate research projects, we realized that we needed earlier committee involvement and greater conversation around faculty feedback on proposals. We now have students choose a committee before submitting a proposal; committee members take extra care reading the proposal; and students write up a document that summarizes and replies to all faculty comments and provides a clear indication for how the student and his or her adviser will move forward with the proposed research. We feel that this change in process increases committee participation and minimizes the potential for unpleasant surprises during thesis defenses.

Appendix V.1 Learning Goals, Anthropology, Undergraduate Program

Appendix V.2 Learning Goals, Anthropology, Graduate Program

**Anthropology Department Learning Goals
Skills and Competencies
June 2017**

Introduction

Anthropology studies human biological and cultural diversity through time and space and the interplay between culture and biology. It encompasses our closest relatives and the human experience from our earliest known bipedal ancestors to the modern world, from the smallest human groups to empires and multinational corporations. Anthropologists deal with prehistoric, historic, and contemporary peoples and with such topics as human evolution, subsistence and settlement systems, family, urban development, transnationalism, globalization, social conflict, gender, symbolic systems, and human ecology. Anthropologists apply the knowledge gained from diverse theoretical perspectives to practical human problems in settings such as health care, educational development, and natural and cultural resource management, among others. As scholars, we are committed to the highest quality teaching in the classroom and the field; to ongoing research both in Portland and abroad; and to active engagement in wider university and community programs.

The curriculum in anthropology is designed to develop an understanding of human life from these various perspectives. It does this by providing, both in general survey courses (Anth 101, 102, 103) and in its departmental major program, a balanced view in terms of the anthropological subfields of biological anthropology, archaeology, linguistics, and socio-cultural anthropology. The departmental major program is of benefit to the liberal arts student in providing the most broadly based view of human adaptation, variation, and achievement. A variety of ethnographic courses is offered for persons with particular regional or area interests, such as East Asia, South Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific Northwest. Finally, the major provides the necessary general anthropological background for those interested in graduate study in the discipline.

Undergraduate Program Learning Outcomes

1. **Communication.** Students will master communication in a number of modalities
 - a. **Writing.**
 - i. Students should be able to understand academic articles and know how to integrate information from them appropriately and accurately into their own writing.
 - ii. Students should be able to write well. Their skills in this area should include, at a minimum, the ability to craft a well-structured argument, appropriately create and use introductions and conclusions, write paragraphs with topic and summary sentences, and reliably and accurately use citation and reference formats. They should have mastery of the conventions suitable for their chosen subfield of anthropology.

- b. **Numeracy.** Students should be able to understand numerical data; craft tables, charts, graphs, and maps; and present scientific data through appropriate means of scientific illustration.
 - c. **Oral, visual, and video presentation.** Students should have competency in presenting information orally (with and without visual support such as PowerPoint), visually, and/or in video format. They should understand how to target their communications for specific audiences, including specialists and non-specialists. They should be able to facilitate discussions and work in groups.
 - d. **Ethics of representation.** Students should know how to evaluate the effects of their communications, particularly regarding impacts on the groups of people being represented.
- 2. **Critical thinking.** Students should show mastery of analytic thinking. They should be able to distinguish between fact and opinion and should be able to evaluate the reliability of their sources. They should be able to demonstrate mastery of content by crafting descriptive summaries, deploy evidence to support or refute arguments, and understand the relationship between theory and data.
- 3. **Professional competence.** Students should develop interpersonal skills and etiquette such as the ability to interact appropriately and ethically in group work and community engagement. Students should know how to apply their anthropological skills and knowledge in professional settings.
- 4. **Research.** Students should show mastery of research in the following modalities
 - a. **Library research and information literacy skills.** Students should demonstrate the ability to locate information using library resources (search engines, key words, Boolean operators) and write a literature review. They should know how to assess the quality, relevance, usefulness, reliability, and validity of information gathered from scholarly and other sources.
 - b. **Research design.** Students should know the difference between inductive and deductive reasoning, understand how to put together and implement a good research project, and grasp how to select appropriate methodologies.
 - c. **Research ethics.** Students should demonstrate the ability to identify ethical considerations when dealing with archaeological materials and human and animal subjects.

**Anthropology Department Graduate Program Learning Goals
Skills and Competencies
September 2017**

Introduction

Anthropology studies human biological and cultural diversity through time and space and the interplay between culture and biology. It encompasses our closest relatives and the human experience from our earliest known bipedal ancestors to the contemporary world, from the smallest human groups to empires and multinational corporations.

Anthropologists explore the lives of prehistoric, historic, and contemporary peoples and address such topics as human evolution, subsistence and settlement systems, family, urban development, health, transnationalism, globalization, social conflict, gender, symbolic systems, and human ecology. Anthropologists apply the knowledge gained from diverse theoretical perspectives to practical human problems in settings such as medical care, educational development, and natural and cultural resource management. As scholars, we are committed to the highest quality teaching in the classroom and the field; to ongoing research both in Portland and abroad; and to active engagement in wider university and community programs.

The graduate curriculum in Anthropology is designed to develop an understanding of human life from these various perspectives. It does this by providing graduate level overviews of three subfields of the discipline in the Graduate Core Seminars (Anth 511, 550, and 570). Students specialize in an area, developing professional competency in one or more of the subfields of biological anthropology, archaeology, or socio-cultural anthropology. During five terms of course-work, students take classes in anthropology and other disciplines related to their fields of study, learning content as well as methodology. In conversation with their faculty advisers, students develop a proposal for a research project or an applied research project, execute the project, write a thesis about the project, and defend the thesis publically. By the end of the program, students will display mastery in the following areas:

Graduate Program Learning Outcomes

1. **Communication.** Students will master communication in a number of modalities
 - a. **Writing.**
 - i. Students will demonstrate a sophisticated ability to find, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and use theories, scholarly writings, and anthropological data from academic sources in their own writing and research.
 - ii. Students will present data and formulate coherent, persuasive arguments based on original research at a professional level for diverse audiences
 - iii. Students will demonstrate mastery of the writing conventions suitable for their chosen subfield of anthropology and for their

chosen presentation milieu, which may include research proposals, reports, applied deliverables, and a graduate thesis.

- b. **Numeracy.** Students will design and develop tables, charts, graphs, and maps and present scientific data through appropriate means of scientific illustration. They will choose and employ appropriate software to generate these materials.
 - c. **Oral, visual, and video presentation.** Students will demonstrate mastery in presenting information orally (with and without visual support such as PowerPoint), visually, and/or in video format. They will understand how to target their communications for specific audiences, including specialists and non-specialists. They will be able to facilitate discussions and work in groups.
 - d. **Ethics**
 - i. Student writing will illustrate the appropriate format for citing referencing primary and secondary source material. Students will understand and apply the principles of academic honesty codified in the Anthropology Department's Statement on Academic Honesty.
 - ii. Students will evaluate the effects of their communications, particularly regarding impacts on the groups of people being represented.
2. **Critical thinking.** Students will show mastery of analytic thinking. They will be able to evaluate the reliability of their sources and place them within intellectual traditions. They will be able to deploy evidence to support or refute arguments, choose theoretical frameworks to analyze data, synthesize materials from different sources, and craft, critique and evaluate conclusions.
3. **Professional competence and conduct.** Students will have mastery over the materials related to their subfield and other disciplines relevant to their work, and they will exemplify professional demeanor in their interactions with their peers, their clients, and the public.
- a. Students will illustrate mastery of anthropological ontologies, demonstrated by passing the Core Seminars in anthropological theory (Anth 511, 550, and 570) and selecting and employing a set of theories in their thesis.
 - b. Students will show mastery of anthropological methods as appropriate to their chosen subfield, demonstrated by applying skills from one or more methodology courses to generate and analyze primary data for their thesis and/or other presentations, deliverables, or reports.
 - c. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how the interplay between theory, research questions, methods, and data shapes our knowledge and/or interpretations of the human past and present.
 - d. Students will show they understand the relevance of anthropology in and to contemporary public issues and engagement.
 - e. Students will know how to apply their anthropological skills and knowledge in professional settings.

- i. Students will know how to conduct themselves responsibly in educational and professional settings when presenting, teaching, and doing research.
 - ii. Students will show mastery of goal setting, efficiency, time management, and effective communication skills
 - iii. Students will develop interpersonal skills and etiquette such as the ability to interact appropriately and ethically in group work and community engagement.
4. **Research.** Students will show mastery of research in the following modalities
 - a. **Library research and information literacy skills.** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify the parameters and key concepts and theorists in a learning community or intellectual discourse; locate information using library resources (search engines, key words, Boolean operators); and write a literature review. They will assess the quality, relevance, usefulness, reliability, and validity of information gathered from scholarly and other sources.
 - b. **Research design and methodology.**
 - i. Students will show mastery of the skills needed to conceptualize and implement an independent research project with a minimum of supervision and direction.
 - ii. Students will apply their knowledge to craft appropriate research questions, perform original research, generate primary data, and analyze the resulting information.
 - iii. Students will select and employ methodologies appropriate to the task; these methods may include qualitative research methods (e.g., interviewing skills, focus group facilitation, fluency in a foreign language, and mastery of analytical software such as NVivo, MaxQDA, and Atlas.ti) and/or quantitative research methods (e.g., statistical and special analysis and mastery of associated software (SPSS, GIS)).
 - c. **Research ethics.**
 - i. Students will show that they understand and can apply in practice the American Anthropology Association's Principles of Ethical Responsibility and its three main principles: 1. Do not harm, 2. Be open and honest regarding your work, and 3. Obtain informed consent and necessary permission.
 - ii. Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and mitigate ethical risks when dealing with archaeological materials and human and animal subjects.
 - iii. Students will understand and be able to apply professional, legal, and ethical codes in the conduct of development, resource extraction and delivery, and other business, NGO, and governmental activities associated with the utilization of anthropological data.

Appendix V.3 Curriculum Map, Anthropology, Undergraduate Program

Appendix V.4 Curriculum Map, Anthropology, Graduate Program

ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT Curriculum Map: Relating Department Learning Goals to Elective Courses

June 2017

| Learning GOALS: | Library Research Skills | Communication (written, numeracy, oral) | Critical Thinking | Professional Competence | Research Design |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| COURSES | | | | | |
| 357 (SA) | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R, A | | |
| 453 (SA) | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, M, A | I | I, R, M, A |
| 458 (SA) | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, M, A | | R, M, A |
| 410 (SA) Lab Mth | R, M, A | I, R, M, A | R, M, A | | R, M, A |
| 300 (JA) | R | I, A | R | I | I |
| 301 (JA) | R | R, A | R | I | R |
| 428 (JA) | R | R, M | M, A | R | R |
| 325 (JA) | R | R | M, A | R | R |
| 425 (JA) | M | M | M | R | I, R |
| 432 (JA) | M, A | M, A | M | R, M | R |
| 362 (SS) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R | | I |
| 363 (SS) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R | I | I |
| 365 (SS) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R | | I |
| 366 (SS) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R | I | I |
| 368 (SS) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R | I | I |
| 301 (DM) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R | I |
| 312 (DM) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R | I |
| 315 (DM) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R | I |
| 355 (DW) | R, A | R, A | I, R, A | I | I, R |
| 454 (DW) | | R, A | R, A | R | M, A |
| 456 (DW) | | M, A | R, A | M | R, A |
| 102 (WC) | I, A | I, A | I | I, A | I |
| 103 (WC) | I | I, R, A | I, A | I, A | I, R, A |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 301 (WC) | | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R, A |
| 305 (WC) | | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, A | I, A |
| 330 (WC) | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R, A | I, R, A |
| 300 (MG) | | R, A | R, A | I | |
| 317 (MG) | | R, A | R, A | | |
| 333 (MG) | | R, A | R, A | | |
| 426 (MG) | | R, M, A | R, M, A | | |
| 432 (MG) | | R, M, A | R, M, A | | |
| 490 (MG) | | R, M, A | R, M, A | | |
| 365 (VB) | I, R | I, R | I, R | I, R | I, R |
| 410 (VB) pub arch | I, R | I, R, M | I, R, M | I, R, M | I, R, M |
| 400 (VB) (which course?) | I, R, M | I, R, M | I, R, M | R, M | R, M |
| 452 (VB) | R, M | R, M | R, M | R, M | R, M |
| 455 (VB) | R, M | R, M | R, M | R, M | R, M |
| 457 (VB) | R | R, M | R, M | R, M | I, R |
| 311 (CK) | R, A | R, A | R, A | R | |
| 325 (CK) | R, A | R, A | R, A | R | |
| 333 (CK) | R | R, A | R, A | I | I, A |
| 345 (CK) | R, M | R, M | | R | |
| 415 (CK) | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, M, A |
| 416 (CK) | R | R, M, A | R, M, A | R | R |
| 425 (CK) | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, M, A | R | R, M, A |
| 411 (which course?) | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, M, A | R | R, M |
| 311 (MS) | R, A | R, A | R, A | R | I, R |
| 310 (SC) | R, A | R, A | R, A | | |
| 312 | | R, A | R, A | | |

| | | | | | |
|----------|------|---------|------------|------|---------|
| 318 (SC) | R, A | R, A | R, A | I, A | I, A |
| 430 (SC) | | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, A | R, A |
| 435 (SC) | | R, M, A | R, M, A | R, A | R, A |
| 314 (TA) | I | I, R, A | I, R, A | I | I, R |
| 370 (MC) | I, R | I, R | I, R, M, A | I | I, R, A |
| 376 (MC) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R, M, A | I | I, R, A |
| 478 (MC) | I, R | I, R, A | I, R | I, R | I, R |

Key:

"I" = Introduced

"R" = reinforced and opportunity to practice

"M" = mastery at the senior or exit level

"A" = assessment evidence collected

ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT Graduate Program Curriculum Map – October 2017

| DEPT GOALS: | Communication | Critical Thinking | Competence and Conduct | Research |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| COURSES: | | | | |
| Core Seminars | | | | |
| 511 SC Core (CK) | R, A | R, A | R | R, A |
| 511 SC Core (JS) | M, A | M, A | | R |
| 511 SC Core (MG) | R, A | M, A | I | I |
| 550 Arc Core (DW) | R, A | R, A | R, A | R, A |
| 570 Bio Core (MC) | M, A | M, A | M, A | M, A |
| Methods | | | | |
| 512 SC Meth (JA) | M | M | M | M |
| 512 SC Meth (MG) | M, A | M, A | M, A | M, A |
| 515 Applied (CK) | R (M), A | R, (M), A | R | R (M) A |
| 515 Applied (JS) | M, A | M, A | M, A | M, A |
| 552 Arch Lab (VB) | M, A | M,A | R | M,A |
| 553 Arch Field (DW) | R, A | R, A | M, A | M, A |
| 555 Faunal (VB) | M,A | M,A | R | M,A |
| 577 Primate FS | | | | |
| 578 Osteology (MC) | R | R | R | R, M, A |
| 579 Forensics (AP) | R | I | M, A | R |
| Thesis process | | | | |
| 501 Research (CK) | R, (M), A | R, (M), A | R | R (M) A |
| 501 Research (DW) | R | R | R | R |
| 501 Research (MG) | | R | M, (A) | M, A |
| 503 Thesis (DW) | M, A | M, A | M, A | M, A |
| 503 Thesis (JS) | M, A | M, A | R | M, A |
| 503 Thesis (CK) | M, A | M, A | R | M, A |
| 503 Thesis (VB) | A | A | A | A |
| 503 Thesis (MG) | M, A | M, A | M, A | M, A |
| 504 Internship (CK) | R (M) | R (M) | M (A) | R, (M), (A) |
| 504 Internship (JS) | R | R, A | R | R |
| Electives | | | | |
| 556: CRM (DW) | R, A | R, A | R, A | I |
| 557: Hunt-Gath (VB) | M,A | M,A | R | M,A |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|------|------|---|------|
| 560: Public Arch (VB) | M,A | M,A | R | M,A |
| 518: Env'l Anth (JS) | M | M | R | R |
| 514: Cult and Ecol (JS) | M | M | R | R |
| 525: Med Anth (JA) | M | M | R | R |
| 532: Gender (JA) | M | M | R | R |
| 526: Trans & Migr'n | M, A | M, A | R | M, A |
| 532: Gender (MG) | M, A | M, A | R | M, A |
| 590: Violence (MG) | M, A | M, A | R | M, A |

Key:

"I" = Introduced

"R" = reinforced and opportunity to practice

"M" = mastery at the senior or exit level

(use only one letter, to indicate the highest of these three levels achieved in the course)

"A" = assessment evidence collected

Appendix V.5 Example Rubric: Communication Goal

ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT PROJECT
Communication Rubric 2017 – Revised

1. **Communication.** Students will master communication in a number of modalities
 - a. **Writing.**
 - i. Students should be able to understand academic articles and know how to integrate information from them appropriately and accurately into their own writing.
 - ii. Students should be able to write well. Their skills in this area should include, at a minimum, the ability to craft a well-structured argument, appropriately create and use introductions and conclusions, write paragraphs with topic and summary sentences, and reliably and accurately use citation and reference formats. They should have mastery of the conventions suitable for their chosen subfield of anthropology.
 - b. **Numeracy.** Students should be able to understand numerical data; craft tables, charts, graphs, and maps; and present scientific data through appropriate means of scientific illustration.
 - c. **Oral, visual, and video presentation.** Students should have competency in presenting information orally (with and without visual support such as PowerPoint), visually, and/or in video format. They should understand how to target their communications for specific audiences, including specialists and non-specialists. They should be able to facilitate discussions and work in groups.
 - d. **Ethics of representation.** Students should know how to evaluate the effects of their communications, particularly regarding impacts on the groups of people being represented.

Portfolios from appropriate core courses will be sampled. Assessment will address two aspects of class portfolios:

- a) The materials presented by the instructors (syllabus, course readings, course projects, assignments, tests etc.)
- b) The work samples of students, and curve for assignment from which samples were selected.

Comparison of a) and b) will indicate the degree of fit between class materials and student abilities. Assessment will consider both the quality of class materials and the degree to which students understood the information presented. Successful teaching includes instructor materials that present materials and student work samples that show mastery of particular skills or knowledge.

**INSTRUCTOR
MATERIALS:**

| Goal: Communication | Excellent | Good | Needs work | No basis to judge |
|------------------------|-----------|------|------------|-------------------|
| a. Writing | | | | |
| b. Numeracy | | | | |
| c. Presentations | | | | |
| d. Ethics and Audience | | | | |

**STUDENT
WORK
SAMPLES:**

| Goal: Communication | Excellent | Good | Needs work | No basis to judge |
|------------------------|-----------|------|------------|-------------------|
| a. Writing | | | | |
| b. Numeracy | | | | |
| c. Presentations | | | | |
| d. Ethics and Audience | | | | |

Appendix V.6 Example Assessment Report, Critical Thinking Goal

ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Spring Assessment Report: Graduate Core Seminars and Critical Thinking Goal

Monday June 11, 2018, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Cramer Hall 41

Present

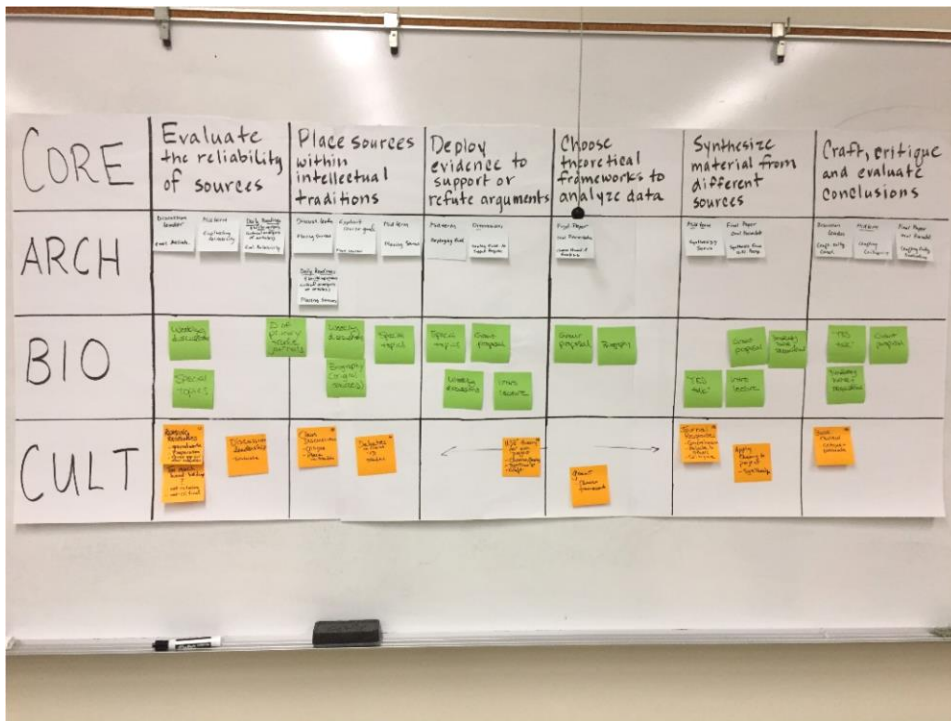
- Virginia Butler (Archaeologist)
- Melanie Chang (Biological Anthropologist)
- Michele Gamburd (Socio-Cultural Anthropologist)
- Charles Klein (Socio-Cultural Anthropologist)
- Jeremy Spoon (Socio-Cultural Anthropologist)
- Mrinalini Tankha (Socio-Cultural Anthropologist)
- Natalie Vasey (Biological Anthropologist)
- Doug Wilson (Archaeologist)
- Janelle Voegele, Director for Teaching & Learning, and Assessment, OAI

Accomplishments

In preparation for our upcoming Academic Program Review, an external review of our program scheduled for 2019, this spring the faculty in the Anthropology Department who teach graduate-level core seminars gathered to discuss several years' worth of syllabi in light of our critical thinking goal. Our data consisted of two syllabi apiece for each of our Core Seminars (Anth 511: Core Seminar in Social and Cultural Anthropology, Anth 550: Core Seminar in Archaeology, and Anth 570: Core Seminar in Physical Anthropology). All of our graduate students take at least two and usually all three of these seminars. Janelle Voegele, Director for Teaching & Learning, and Assessment in the Office of Academic Innovation joined us to facilitate the conversation. She and Charles Klein prepared the agenda for the meeting.

The meeting began with a brief review of the text of our graduate-level critical thinking goal, separated into six key areas of mastery for ease of discussion. We then addressed the question of how the graduate core courses contribute to achieving the critical thinking goal. We understand that our core courses serve students of all three subfields, and that often we teach to those who may not take another course in our subfield for the rest of their graduate career. We asked how we would answer the following question, were a student to pose it to us: "Even if I'm not going to be a [cultural theorist, archaeologist, geneticist, biological anthropologist], can I still [understand the key questions in the field, place sources within intellection traditions, etc.]" Our goal for the day's discussion was to come away with some thoughts and ideas that will be useful for all of our core graduate seminars.

Having reviewed the goals of our meeting, we broke into small groups by subfield. In these small groups, we reviewed and discussed the two syllabi and associated assignments and class activities for our subfield's core seminar. Janelle Voegele had prepared in advance a large chart providing elements of the critical thinking goal across the top and names of the subfields of anthropology down the left side. Using sticky notes, members of the subfield groups placed examples of how the assignments and activities in our syllabi fulfilled aspects of the critical thinking goal. The results of this exercise are captured in Janelle's report (posted online in affiliation with this report) and portrayed in the photograph below:



Once each group had discussed their syllabi and assignments and put their post-it notes onto the critical thinking sheet, we left our subgroups to work together. Representatives from each small group told members of the other groups about the assignments that they were considering and how they felt that each assignment fulfilled one or more of elements of the critical thinking goal. We discussed the pros and cons of the assignments.

The gathered faculty were interested to observe some strong similarities across the Cores. We spoke about how we get students to engage with the readings. Some faculty provide discussion questions that students either responded to online or talked about in class; others ask student discussion leaders to come up with those questions themselves. Some faculty provide assignments (e.g., journal entries) that explicitly require students to synthesize material, compare the current reading with other readings, and critique the theories and positions being read, whereas other faculty hope that discussion leaders will prompt classmates to explore those intricacies. We discussed what we thought did and did not work well, probing the question of how much structure to provide through instructor input and how much to let the students formulate for themselves. Janelle Voegelé noted that research in education suggests that newcomers to a field may experience the incoming information as a “kaleidoscopic flux,” and that adult learners appreciate receiving some structure and feedback from the instructor to facilitate their understanding.

In the courses that require midterms and finals, students had the opportunity to trace intellectual lineages, synthesize and critique materials, and show their mastery of content. Several faculty ask students to write a grant proposal. They feel that this exercise familiarizes

students with the proposal genre while also requiring that they think critically about theory and tie theory to methodology.

All faculty ask students to give both formal presentations and to give informal presentations and/ or serve as discussion leaders. These assignments are covered in our “Communication” goal, however, so we did not spend a lot of time talking about them.

All of the cores provide the opportunity for students to explore areas, topics, and theories of interest to individuals. Often these projects served as the final or culminating assignment for the term. Students studying in that subfield often use the material from this part of their Core in their thesis. Students studying in other subfields chose a topic related to their interests, but still within the realm of the Core in question. Faculty reported good results from this type of individually tailored assignment; examples of this sort of assignment include a biography, a book review, a term paper project, and the crafting of text to use in a thesis or thesis proposal.

After a short break during which we each filled a plate from the catered food on a side table, we reconvened as a single group to think about the spread of sticky notes through the six sub-elements of the critical thinking goal. We noted that sub-goal 4 (“choosing theoretical frameworks to analyze data”) and part of sub-goal 6 (“crafting... theories and conclusions”) were activities that took place when students wrote their theses. The Cores did not offer much opportunity for students to engage in those areas of critical thinking, though they did provide the foundational skills and content for students to work with when doing their own research and analysis. Several faculty noted that we would like to see our graduate publishing articles from their theses and from future projects that they undertake as, for example, contract archaeologists and applied anthropologists.

As we did during our Fall Retreat, we held an energetic discussion regarding the importance of having our graduate students take all three of the graduate Core seminars. For example, students in other subfields learn about the importance of the scientific method and evolutionary theory by taking the Core in Biological Anthropology. Education in all three Cores provides students at least with a bare minimum of knowledge about the totality of our discipline and prepares them to answer some of the basic questions that arise (from undergraduate students and members of the public) about anthropology as a whole.

Future plans

The meeting concluded with a sense that we had found it useful to discuss the contents of the various Core courses, and that we would make sure to share the syllabi with each other on a regular basis. We did not feel a need to take a more aggressive approach to coordinating the syllabi for the Core seminars, given that the syllabi we reviewed showed ample coverage of the aspects of the Critical Thinking goal that were appropriately covered by the course.

We noted that students could always use more practice with analyzing data in light of theory, that students needed experience crafting theory (not just critiquing it), and that students could use more sign-posting of instances when theory was put to use in scholarly publications and professional activities.

Things that we might consider doing in the future include:

- Crafting a common set of student evaluation questions for graduate students to fill out in all of the Cores.

- Discussing how to assure satisfactory experiences and outcomes for graduate students in mixed 400/500 level courses
- Taking advantage of services offered through OAI to craft some videos (to show in all of our Cores, and/or to post online) regarding whatever topics we might like to cover.

In September at our Fall Retreat, we will discuss our upcoming external review and consider what final steps we need to take to prepare for this exercise. If we decide that we need to have looked at some student outcomes related to our graduate-level education, we could assess several recent theses and applied theses with respect to one of our graduate learning goals. Alternatively, we could hold a more general discussion about our curriculum.

For our next assessment exercise in Spring 2019, one option would be to continue our discussion of our critical thinking goal by evaluating student work that reflects the various critical thinking indicators. Another option, given the importance of helping to students to bridge their academic studies and work, would be to assess student outcomes related to the professional competence goal.