The Department of Anthropology has a strong commitment to graduate and undergraduate education and scholarship. The department's goals are to 1) maintain quality scholarship; 2) conduct engaged and community based research; 3) becoming an exemplar of rigorous applied graduate training in sociocultural, archaeology and bioanthropology; 4) continue to offer an excellent undergraduate education. On the whole many of faculty are well published and are visible and well respected in their fields. With several strategic hires that focus on applied approaches to anthropology, the department is poised to take a leadership role in the Northwest region.

**Department Identity**

Portland State University has identified several important areas in its strategic plan and they include 1) provide civic leadership through partnerships; 2) improve student success; 3) achieve global excellence; 4) enhance educational opportunity; 5) expand resources and improve effectiveness. In many ways the Department of Anthropology at PSU is fulfilling many of the parts of this strategic plan. However, it is important that the department's strategic plan be more explicit about how it helps fulfill the mission of the University.

According to the department's strategic plan, programmatic emphases have been on Environmental and Applied Anthropology. We believe that while these emphases are important, a different scheme can be used to enhance the identity of the program within the university. It is clear that there is an enormous synergy around Environmental issues. The program also has a strong focus on issues of Heritage and global identities that cross cut archaeology and cultural anthropology.
In sum, we recommend that the department define its emphases according to intellectual areas of pursuit to include: Environment, Global Identities and Heritage, and a third area of focus to be developed in the medium- to long-term, such as Health. We believe that there is tremendous growth potential in the health-related fields given student and faculty interests, opportunities for employment nationally and in the Portland area, and institutional strengths at PSU. A health emphasis will also provide a link between cultural and physical anthropology, paving the way for a unified strategy in future hiring decisions and curriculum development.

**Challenge:**
- There does not seem to be an agreed upon term on the website or the strategic plan for the archaeology component of the program, nor does the document identify the linkages between the different heritage studies scholars that crosscut the subdisciplines. The terms Heritage, Cultural Resource Management, Policy, Applied Anthropology, and Archaeology are often interchangeable. We suggest that “heritage” encompasses the diverse strengths of the department.

**Engagement: Applied Anthropology**

Many of the faculty members already practice applied anthropology to some degree, and they are engaged in local, regional and international communities. They are poised to make a key transition into becoming a well-respected applied anthropology department. If the department takes on the challenge to transform itself into an applied program, it will serve an important niche in the field of anthropology and the northwest region (Oregon, Washington and Idaho) of the United States. Only one other program (Oregon State University) in the northwest region has a focus in applied anthropology. Developing an applied program in an urban area, with its proximity to key federal, state, and local government entities, NGOs, and businesses, will help place the Department of Anthropology in a leadership role in the region.

**Suggestion:**
Partnerships

The department has made some significant strides in being engaged in the local community. A key partnership is the CESU agreement with the National Park Service. This agreement has made available important resources to the department through the development of a local archaeological field school in historical archaeology. It provides student training internships and student assistantships. The department has an even longer partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service which supported the annual Archaeological Field School in the 1990s as well as on-going research on the nearby Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge. It too has provide internships and student jobs. Additionally the department has a equally longstanding partnership with the Chinook Tribe for the archaeological work on the Ridgefield Refuge.

Suggestions:

- The department needs to explore other potential partnerships to help increase student opportunities and funding. These areas can be with local NGOs, local government, state and federal agencies, and private businesses.

- It is clear that the department can make important linkages to several campus initiatives, such as Native American Studies, the School of the Environment, Systems Science, and the various health initiatives in different departments (sociology) and schools (community health) as well as OSHU. It is important that the department is proactive in making these connections.

Department Growth

If faculty members leave or retire it is important that their lines are filled immediately. For instance, if Thornton does not return it is necessary that his line be filled with a scholar who has a focus on environmental anthropology. Similarly, Ames should be replaced by an archaeologist with a Northwest regional perspective. We also suggest that over the next five years the Department of Anthropology be allowed to hire 3 tenure track lines, as described in the Department’s strategic plan (p. 29-35), to build the health component of the program and strengthen the heritage component. The administration's support in future hire(s) in the area of Health will help to create a well rounded program that is situated to take advantage of
partnerships within and outside of the university. The hires can be made with little impact on the College as long as the College uses the salary savings from retired and/or non-returning faculty members.

**Undergraduate Program:**

**Strengths:**

- The number of number of undergraduate majors is growing significantly (approximately 143 in FY 2004 and over 190 in FY 2009. P. 4, Departmental Background).
- A wide variety of courses are being taught regularly, especially in Sociocultural Anthropology and Archaeology.
- The pool of adjunct professors is enthusiastic and dedicated to the students, the quality of their courses, and the department.
- The full-time faculty are enthusiastic about teaching undergraduate students.
- There is a well-developed Archaeology field school in collaboration with the National Park Service.
- The department participates in the Freshman Inquiry program, having tenured faculty contribute their time.

**Challenges:**

- **Mentoring and advising:** Guiding a student through their university experience requires two related kinds of involvement:
  
- **Advising:** Students need help tracking their courses to ensure that they are taking what they need to fulfill departmental as well as university-wide requirements. To advise in this area requires knowledge of these requirements especially as they have changed over multiple catalogues. This is a rather technical exercise, helped tremendously (but not entirely resolved) by online degree evaluation programs.
o **Suggestion:** Financial support from the Dean’s office will enable the department either to hire a non-faculty member to do this work, or to provide a course release for a faculty member to take this task on. Hiring a dedicated non-faculty staff member or graduate student is preferable, in order to keep faculty in the classroom as much as possible. The Department cannot currently cover this need given existing resources. The new advising plan will make this even more challenging.

- **Mentoring:** Mentoring requires sustained qualitative contact with students throughout their time at PSU. Issues covered include advisement on how to match personal interests with specific courses inside and outside of the department; career planning; getting support for developing academic skills (like writing); and coping with the stresses of college responsibilities (including directing them to university counseling services, if necessary). This requires a more sustained and personal relationship between faculty and student. Undergraduate students we interviewed expressed an interest in a more intensive mentoring. It is likely that this kind of relationship, combined with more technical advising, will increase retention, progression, and graduation rates.

o **Suggestion:** The full-time faculty currently spend much time mentoring students, but students are not assigned a faculty advisor. What this means is that students go to whomever is (or is perceived to be) most available and compatible with their interests. Given the growing number of majors and the potential for this task to fall unevenly on certain faculty, we recommend that the majors be assigned and distributed evenly among the faculty, with flexibility for students and faculty to re-arrange themselves. The chair should work to ensure, however, that no faculty member ends up with a disproportionate number of majors to mentor. Meetings with faculty mentors can focus on the qualitative issues mentioned above, and faculty or students can solicit the technical help of the Advisor to ensure that students are on track for graduation.
• **FTE Teaching**
Over the last several years, the effective FTE in the classroom has been 4.5 out of a total of 7.5 FTE appointments. Faculty have bought out their time for various reasons including research, union involvement, and sabbaticals. Since faculty will continue to be involved in these activities (perhaps increasingly involved in sponsored research), the department is in critical need of several additional tenured/tenure-track faculty lines. We concur with the department in recommending that three additional lines be added to sustain the excellent undergraduate and graduate programs (see p. 3 of the External Review booklet; see above for additional explanation).

• **Language Requirement for the B.S. degree**
The B.A. and the B.S. degrees currently have the same requirements at the major level, including the requirement for the equivalent of two years’ worth of language proficiency. Given the diversity of student needs and educational goals, we recommend re-thinking the necessity of requiring language training of all students. We suggest substituting the language requirement for the B.S. degree with a requirement for statistical or other quantitative training. This may have the additional effect of increasing overall anthropology majors.

• **Teaching Laboratories and Equipment:**
The physical space of the teaching laboratories is in need of renovation to provide modern storage facilities, adequate lighting, and other upgrades. Supplies such as calipers and bone casts need regular replacement.

**Suggestions:**
• **Laboratory fees:** we recommend charging students a laboratory fee to cover some of the recurring costs.
• **Capital improvement:** the Dean’s office needs to work with the department to locate campus funds for renovating laboratory space.
• **Minors:**
The Departmental Strategic Plan (DSP) identifies its wish to explore developing minors within the major. We recommend against doing that because of overall shortages in faculty time, and because that space in Anthropology classes is already at or nearly at capacity.

• **Concentrations within the Major:**
The DSP expresses a wish to explore developing concentrations within the major. We recommend against that because it is administratively complicated; it is generally too early in a student’s career to ask them to specialize; and it may stand in the way of maintaining and further developing a sense of a unified student body of majors.

• **Preparing Students for Careers and Graduate School:**
Continue and further develop student awareness of what their options are after they graduate. We learned that this is being done to some extent (for example, one-time sessions on how to apply to graduate school), and that effort was positively recognized by the students. That effort might be expanded to include other topics, such as resume-writing, job and internship awareness, etc.

• **Adjunct professors taught 23% of overall Anthropology SCH from 1996-2009 (16,728 out of 71,726 SCH) without including online courses and 27% including online courses. This is about the average of the university in general.**

**Graduate Program:**

**Strengths:**
• The faculty provide high quality mentoring and training of students who are well-prepared for further graduate training and careers in anthropology.
• The faculty work well together in training students.
• The area of Environmental Anthropology is well-represented among the faculty across all three subdisciplines.
• Scholarship is strong in the area of heritage and global identity studies.
• The faculty are enthusiastic about their scholarship and are generally highly productive.
• The faculty are committed to engagement in communities at the local and international level.
• Strong connections exist between archaeology program and the local employment community.
• The archaeology component of the program is in line with the Society for American Archeology's call for teaching Archeology in the 21st century. The topics include teaching about 1) Stewardship; 2) Diverse pasts; 3) Social relevance; 4) Ethics and values; 5) Written and oral communication; 6) Fundamental archaeological skills; 7) Real-world- problem solving (Bender and Smith 2000).

Challenges:

1. **Length of time to graduate:**
Students are taking an average of five years to graduate from the master’s program. This is too long for several reasons. First, it prevents students from getting into the workforce with the appropriate degree in a timely manner. Second, most masters programs in the country are 2-3 year programs, while doctoral programs in Anthropology are being redesigned to graduate students in 5-7 years. Third, keeping students around that long dilutes faculty resources and prevents them from focusing on newer students. In other words, it takes faculty away from other teaching and research/fund-raising commitments. Fourth, prolonged graduation rates detract from the university’s goal to graduate students in a timely manner, as measured in published statistics of graduation rates.

Suggestions:
• More structured advising is necessary for students writing theses.
• The department might consider requiring a proposal writing class at the end of the first year, letting students know upon admission that this will be required of them. Students selected for admission should show promise of being able to do this.
• Encourage students to choose thesis topics of appropriate complexity.
• Encourage more students to take the non-thesis track.
• Eliminate the language requirement, with the idea that people working with a foreign language will become proficient in that language. This can also be encouraged or even enforced through advisement.

2. **Defining thesis and “policy” tracks:**
The non-thesis, or “policy” track (which requires an internship, two additional courses, and a shorter final written product) is relatively new in the department. Only two students have graduated in this track. The department recognizes the need to reconceptualize this option. The faculty concur that a non-thesis track is appropriate for sociocultural students who are seeking applied employment.

The archaeology faculty has varying positions about what constitutes a Master's project and a Master's thesis. About half of the graduate archaeology students wanted to take the applied track; however, they were encouraged to go the thesis route. Faculty believe that completing a thesis is important for RPA certification. RPA certification is important; however, writing a thesis is not the only way to achieve certification. Certification can also be achieved with work experience.

**Suggestions:**
• Rename the track from “policy” to “non-thesis.”

3. **Graduate Assistance**
• Graduate teaching assistants contribute positively to undergraduate teaching. All assistantships help the department recruit the brightest and the best graduate students to their program.
Challenge:
- There are too few graduate assistantships.

Solution:
- Identify additional resources for expanding the offerings of assistantships through additional resources from the Dean’s offices, by including assistantships in grants and contracts.

4. Central Meeting Place

Strength:
- PSU has a dedicated graduate student body that spends a significant amount of time in the department working on thesis projects

Challenge:
- Graduate students do not have a central place to meet, exchange ideas, and create and reinforce a culture in the department.

Solution:
- Develop space for graduate students that includes computers and a gathering place. Ideally, this will not be located in a basement and will be relatively close to the department office so that they feel part of the department and can add to the culture of the department.

Miscellaneous

Faculty:

Strength:
- The faculty work well together. For example, they meet at least once per year for retreats in order to plan for the year and assessment curriculum.
Challenge and solutions:

- Salaries are below the national average, making it difficult to attract and retain the best and brightest scholars. The Dean’s office should do an assessment of salary equity in comparative departments in the region.
- Workloads do not reflect course credit for time faculty put in to internships, thesis direction, independent studies, and other such engagements.
- Faculty need to take a more proactive role in pursuing projects, partnerships, and other activities that are beneficial to the individual as well as the department. While the department chair takes on these responsibilities, it is important that activities get delegated to faculty.
- Adjuncts need to be given the opportunity to participate in departmental meetings to foster a sense of community and to recognize their dedicated contributions.

Staff:

Strength:

- The department has a very dedicated staff person who handles all of the daily administrative operations of the department. The staff member is well versed in department, college and university administration.

Challenge:

- One administrative staff person oversees the entire department which does not allow the timely and efficient operation of the department. Illness, vacations, or departure of staff member will bring the administration side of the program to a halt.

Solution:

- Another staff person will take some of the burden off of the current administrative person. Cross training will also help in the successful operations of the program.

Budget:

Strength:
• The Department has several initiatives that bring in grant and contract money to the university. This revenue includes a contract archaeology program (Doug Douer), the CESU with the NPS (Wilson), and contracts and grants with Federal entities and NGOs.

Challenge:
• There is no incentive for the department to raise money through contracts and grants. Overhead money is not shared with the department. The current structure will hamper entrepreneurial activities. It is important that the Dean and Chair discuss the possibility of all forms of revenue sharing.

• Faculty indicate that they have a difficult time negotiating contract management in the university.

Solution:
• The chair should negotiate with the dean some type of revenue stream to help finance some of the needs of the department.

• Additional support will be needed in the way of research infrastructure as the department expands its contracts and grants.

The department of anthropology is well grounded in international work and it also strong in heritage studies. With a few strategic hires the program will develop as a national leader in applied anthropology. In sum, these are the eight action points we recommend:

1. Address department identity
2. Develop a hiring plan based on the identity
3. Resolve the non-thesis track option
4. Reduce time to graduation for masters students
5. Develop an undergraduate mentoring and advising system
6. Increase professional support staff in the department
7. Acquire and renovate student space (computers, gathering, teaching laboratories)
8. Negotiating with the Dean for new revenue streams (e.g. grant and contract overhead)

While Oregon State has developed a Master’s and Ph.D. program in applied anthropology, PSU has “an unfair advantage.” It is in close proximity to many national, state, and local government entities, NGOs, and businesses, and it can more easily create linkages to these organizations, which will help leverage resources for the department. The Anthropology program at PSU has tremendous potential, and tapping these advantages will help it grow and thrive as a regional and national leader in applied anthropology.