ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
Fifth Annual Portfolio Review
2:30-3:45 p.m. Cramer Hall 141
11 June 2007
K.M. Ames

PRESENT

Kenneth Ames (Anthropology Department Chairperson and Anthropological Archaeologist)
Margaret Everett (Sociocultural Anthropologist)
Michele Gamburd (Sociocultural Anthropologist)
Natalie Vasey (Biological Anthropologist)
Virginia Butler (Anthropological Archaeologist).
Doug Wilson (Historic Archaeologist)
Tom Thornton, (Sociocultural Anthropologist) was in Washington DC, participating in an NSF Arctic Programs review panel

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

I. Assessment of Course Portfolios using ‘Applications of Anthropology’ Rubric

The group reviewed course portfolios from ANTH 333 (The Anthropology of Food) and ANTH 399 (Historical Archaeology and the Origins of the Pacific Northwest) focusing on sub-goal II.3, which states “Students will understand the relevance of anthropology in and to contemporary public issues. This was the first time the department assessed goals using materials from elective classes. In previous years, we had looked at required courses.

Outcomes:

- Materials from ANTH 333 included the course syllabus, examples of portfolio assignments, and the portfolio assignments. The instructor proved examples of an “A,” a “B+” and a “C-/D+” paper. However, given the timing of the meeting at the beginning of finals week, grading was not complete and so a grade distribution was not yet available. That will be supplied for the class file.
  - The faculty discussed the specific course as well as broader issues related to the goal and teaching. The discussion focused on how the topic of food provided multiple avenues for tackling a diverse range of modern problems from nutritional sufficiency to multinational corporations.
  - Review of the course materials showed students had a grasp of and interest in anthropology’s relevance to contemporary problems. Differences in grades reflected different skill levels and quality of execution of the assignment.
  - Both the Instructor Materials and Work Samples were rated “3.” Faculty commented on the sophistication of the readings.

- Materials from ANTH 399 included the course syllabus, the portfolio assignment, and copies of 3 student essays (highest A, lowest A, lowest B, and lowest grade)
for the assignment targeted to address this goal. (Note: this course is now formally numbered ANTH 355)

- The group reviewed these materials. The point of the assessment assignment was to show how Historical Archaeology specifically can provide important material insights into the making of the modern world at least as important as those provided by the documentary record and different from that record.
- Three of the four work samples accomplished that with the lowest B being moderately successful. The lowest grade utterly missed the point of the assignment.
- The Instructor Materials were rated 3; the work samples 3. The lowest grade seemed to reflect student effort.

II. Scoring Rubrics and Learning Goals

The group discussed the original plans to review the overall scoring rubrics and to develop rubrics for goals in Sections I and II.

Outcomes:

- The group reviewed the “Applications of Anthropology’ scoring rubric and decided the rubric needed “tweaking.” This will be done over the summer for consideration at the Fall, 2007, Departmental Retreat
- The group felt the discussions last year and this year confirmed the value of the goals and they did not require revision at this time.

III. Assessment plans for 2007/2008

- The group decided to follow the procedure of deciding the goals to assess at the Fall retreat.
- The faculty charged with this year’s assessment had provided all the information required by our process, but faculty still need to be reminded that we need:
  - Syllabus
    - A copy of all assignments
    - The grade distribution for the work sample assignment (not the final course grades)
    - The work sample assignment
    - A copy of the highest a, lowest A, lowest B, lowest C, and the lowest grade in the class.