

## Portland State University Faculty Senate Motion

# Changes to Area Distribution Designation for Some Anthropology Courses

## Background, rationale, and preliminary discussions

**Background:** At PSU, Archaeology courses are offered through the Anthropology Department. Since Anthropology is traditionally categorized as Social Science, the Archaeology courses have been designated as such for the purpose of fulfilling the distribution requirement. In 2017, the motion to designate biological anthropology courses as science was presented and passed at the Faculty Senate. Subsequently the Anthropology Department conducted a review of the Archaeology courses and concluded that they should be designated as science rather than social science.

The survey of designation practices at other institutions shows a variation where Archaeology is designated as social science at some institutions and science at others; and references drawn from federal funding organizations such as NFS and the federal government's job description show that Archaeology is listed as science and/or social science. Given this status, the best way to determine whether the Archaeology courses at PSU should be designated as social science or science is to review the curricular content.

**Rationale:** Archaeology is inherently interdisciplinary covering both social science on one hand and natural and physical science on the other. While being housed in the Anthropology Department, which encompasses both social science and science, the archeological curriculum at PSU is rooted in the scientific method and the scientific process of inquiry. The courses on the list teach science literacy, scientific methods, statistics, and scientific writing with a component of hands-on lab work and field work. Changing the distribution area for these courses from 'social science' to 'science with lab/fieldwork' will enhance student success by raising awareness among students taking archeology courses that they will engage with scientific curriculum, increasing flexibility in pursuing courses across the university, and increasing options for science with lab/fieldwork courses for those fulfilling the science distribution requirement.

After reviewing the curricular content and the context where the request was made, the ARC suggested that the courses be designated as Science with Lab/Fieldwork as all the courses contain a lab or fieldwork component. The ARC also acknowledges that transfer courses with equivalent course number will be designated as Science with Lab/Fieldwork within the purview of transfer credit evaluation process while unclear cases will be reviewed by the Anthropology department and a different designation will be dealt with through a petition process.

## Motion presented by the Academic Requirements Committee

The Faculty Senate approves the changes in the distribution designation from 'Social Science' to 'Science with Lab/Fieldwork' for the following courses.

ANTH 102 Introduction to Archaeology	ANTH 453 Archaeological Field Methods
ANTH 350* Archaeological Method and Theory	ANTH 454 Archaeological Field School
ANTH 355U Colonial and Post-Colonial Archaeology	ANTH 455 Analysis of Faunal Remains
ANTH 452 Archaeological Lab Methods	

\* Pending UCC approval to add a lab component to Anth 350