

California State University, Stanislaus  
**Department of Anthropology**  
Assessment Report  
2006-07

**MISSION**

The goal of the Anthropology program, appropriate to the discipline, is to teach students to understand and appreciate the origin, evolution, and present diversity of human biology and culture. This is achieved by using a holistic approach covering basic subject areas, namely, archaeology, cultural, physical/biological, and applied anthropology to fulfill the Department of Anthropology's Learning Objectives.

**PROGRAM GOALS**

- Provide awareness about the complexity and comparative nature of anthropological knowledge, which studies humans as both biological and cultural beings.
- Provide cross-cultural information, which has important implications for human organization, cultural understanding and living among diverse societies in an increasingly complex and interdependent global environment.
- Provide both core and general education courses to facilitate options for various programs, including the Anthropology major and minor, the Liberal Studies Concentration, single subject teaching credential, and post baccalaureate/interdisciplinary M.A. program.
- Provide education which gives students a broad and informed knowledge base as well as the conceptual and analytical skills necessary for graduate school, professional training, and careers in diverse fields including research, teaching, administration, development work and related areas requiring insights into the concept of culture.

**STUDENT LEARNING GOALS/ OBJECTIVES**

- Facilitate the mastery of key concepts within the field of anthropology, including an understanding of the complexities, diversity, and history of human evolution and culture, and the holistic relationship between culture, biology, and history that is central to the discipline of anthropology.
- Develop key general and specific skills including writing, research, analytical reasoning, critical thinking, public speaking, and computer skills, with an aim to keep majors competitive in a very demanding contemporary workplace.
- Develop a global awareness through competence in the study of geographic regions as well as societies and their interdependency with the intent of enabling majors to be competitive in a job market that is increasingly globalizing.
- Develop specific skills through training in the methods of anthropological subfields (qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques, including ethnographic/participant observation field methods, data analysis, statistical analysis, forensics, and archaeological methods).
- Expose majors to a variety of teaching and learning objectives and practices in the field of anthropology and its four subfields, namely physical anthropology, cultural anthropology, archaeology, and linguistic anthropology.

- Enable the application of anthropological theories and methods through real world applied work (in the form of internships, service learning, field experience, research projects, and study abroad experience) that is required of all majors.
- Provide majors with training appropriate to prepare them for graduate and/or professional school and teaching.
- Enable majors to obtain a sophisticated understanding of the theoretical orientations, holistic perspectives, and history of anthropology.

### WHAT DATA WERE COLLECTED AND HOW?

In accordance with the Assessment Plan ratified by the Department of Anthropology, the following assessment measures were employed during the 2006-2007 academic year.

#### DIRECT:

- **Embedded Exams and Assignments:** Data routinely derived from course assignments and exams are used to ascertain progress on multiple learning objectives and program goals.
- **Capstone Course:** Anth 4500, required of all majors, evaluates each student's comprehensive achievement on a variety of departmental learning objectives.
- **Fieldwork:** For Catalogue Years 2006 and later, students are required to complete a "Practical Requirement," in which student performance in a field context under faculty supervision is evaluated.

#### INDIRECT:

- **Exit Survey:** An Anthropology Exit Survey (attached) was distributed to senior anthropology majors enrolled in the Capstone and Human Evolution courses. These courses are required to complete the major and are therefore good pools from which to draw thoughtful, engaged responses to an exit survey.

### HOW DID THE FACULTY USE THE DATA? WHEN DID FACULTY MEET TO DISCUSS FINDINGS?

- In 2005-06 (prior to the formation of the campus-wide Program Assessment Committee), the Department of Anthropology redesigned its major in response to its own assessment of its program goals, mission, and learning objectives. The major was designed specifically to require the development of practical experience within the field of anthropology as a condition of conferring the BA degree.
- Since the formation of the campus-wide Program Assessment Committee, the Department of Anthropology has rewritten its mission statement, program goals, and learning objectives with respect to the changes it instituted in the major in 2005-06. (The revised mission statement, program goals, and learning objectives are included above)
- In accordance with the Assessment Plan, the Department of Anthropology has begun to track the success of these changes, as well as assess other program goals and learning objectives, using both its traditional direct methods and its newly instituted indirect method: the Anthropology Exit Survey.
- In Spring, 2007, the Anthropology Exit Survey was written and approved by the Department of Anthropology and administered to senior anthropology majors in the Capstone (ANTH 4500) and Human Evolution (ANTH 3750) courses. The data were compiled and evaluated by the Program Assessment Coordinator (then Jeff Mantz). Results of the survey (attached) were

distributed electronically to members of the Anthropology Department and discussed informally (in both face-to-face meetings and through intra-office emails) immediately following their distribution. The results of the survey were then revisited during the September Department Meeting, as planning began for the revision of the survey during the 2007-2008 academic year.

- It should also be noted that faculty within the Department of Anthropology view the Assessment Plan as part of an ongoing (and often lively) discussion of pedagogical, curricular, and discipline-specific issues. These conversations often spill out of the confines of department meetings into hallways and offices, and, consequently, some of the most productive use of assessment data has occurred spontaneously and in very informal settings.

#### **WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING STUDENT LEARNING WERE MADE?**

- While the Anthropology Exit Survey provided an abundance of useful information that we continue to digest, the strongest theme that emerged was a student desire for more hands-on, practical experience opportunities within the anthropology curriculum. Survey respondents believed that, given the nature of anthropological research, active learning approaches (including hand-on activities and fieldwork) provided them with a deeper understanding of course material and the practical skills necessary to pursue graduate studies (85% of the 2007 survey respondents plan to pursue an advanced degree in anthropology) or work in related fields. The faculty strongly concur with this student assessment, and have taken the following steps to increase practical experience opportunities within the curriculum:
  - Evaluated positively the addition of the practical experience requirement during the 2005-2006 re-design of the Anthropology Major
  - Actively recruited new faculty committed to the development and implementation of fieldwork opportunities for students, including an archaeological field school
  - Worked to schedule courses with an active hands-on or fieldwork component, including ANTH 4420 (Bodies of Evidence) and ANTH 4605 (Archaeological Field Methods) more frequently.
  - Prioritized the development of new hands-on oriented classes, including ANTH 4600 (Constructing Identity on the Edge of the Maya World; Honors Summit class) and ANTH 4640 (archaeological field school in western Honduras).
  - Worked to include more hands-on activities in individual classes as appropriate.

**Program Matrix for the Department of Anthropology**

	<b>Introductory</b> Lower division Anth 2060, 2080, 2090	<b>Gen Anth</b> Upper div. 3000, 3010	<b>Ethnography</b> 3070, 3080, 3090, 3105, 3106, 3301, 3320, 4250, 4650	<b>Ethnology</b> 3900, 4030 4040, 4130 4140, 4150 4165, 4170 4181, 4200 4210, 4211 4221	<b>Archaeology</b> 3600, 4321 4605, 4625 4640	<b>Phys. Anth</b> 3750, 3760 3780, 4400 4410, 4420	<b>Applied</b> 4200, 4420/22, 4210 4250 4650	<b>WP</b> 3900 4221	<b>Capstone</b> 4500
<b>1. Mastery of key concepts</b>									
(a) complexities, diversity, and history of human evolution	H* (2080,2090) Exams	H (3010) Exams			H Exams	H Exams			M*
(b)holistic nature	H Exams	H Exams	H Exams Papers	H Exams Papers	H Exams	H Exams	M	M	H Essay Exams
<b>2. Development of Skills</b>									
(a)Analytical skills, research methods				H Projects Fieldwork	H Fieldwork Labs	H Lab Projects Fieldwork	H Lab Projects Fieldwork	M	H Papers
(b)Effective written and oral communication		M (3010) H (3000) O. Pres	M (3105, 3301,3320) H (3070, 3080, 3090, 3106) O. Pres.	H (4165) M (3900, 4030, 4130, 4221,4211, 4170)	M Field journals Site reports	M	H (4200, 4210) O. Pres.	H O. Pres. Papers	H O. Pres. Papers
<b>3. Global awareness and interdependency</b>	H (2060) Exams	H (3000) Exams Papers	H Exams Papers	H Exams Papers	H Projects		H Projects	M	M
<b>4. Methodological training in specific subfields</b>				H Projects Fieldwork	H Fieldwork Labs	H Lab Projects Fieldwork	H Lab Projects Fieldwork	M	H Papers
<b>5. Expose majors to teaching and learning objectives</b>	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
<b>6. Application of theories through real world projects</b>				H Projects Fieldwork	H Fieldwork Labs	H Lab Projects Fieldwork	H Lab Projects Fieldwork	M	H Papers
<b>7. Training appropriate for graduate/professional school.</b>	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
<b>8. Sophistication in theoretical orientation, holistic perspectives, &amp; history of anthropology.</b>	H Exams	H Exams	H Exams Papers	H Exams Papers	H Exams	H Exams	M	M	H Essay Exams

\* H = Learning objectives with high relevance

M = Learning objectives with moderate relevance