Two Year Progress Report
Anthropology (BA)
January 2016

The Anthropology Department completed its assessment in 2011-2012 and the response to the external review was submitted to the Senate in March 2013. This report addresses the steps the department has undertaken since that time to respond to the seven recommendations suggested by the external review committee.

**Recommendation 1.** That course offerings at different year levels be streamlined to reflect the Public Issues Anthropology focus as outlined in the proposal brief of the University of Waterloo Masters in Public Issues in Anthropology.

**Status:** Done

**Details:** The Anthropology Department has completed a revision of the undergraduate plans, following the Faculty of Arts Plan Standardization. The new plans became active in Fall 2015. The requirements for the major were streamlined, and clearer sequences of courses in the three subfields of cultural, archaeological, and biological anthropology were developed. The course descriptions were revised to better reflect the Public Issues Anthropology focus that was initially developed for the graduate program.

**Recommendation 2.** That ANTH 101 and ANTH 102 be merged at the first-year level into one introductory level course that would provide a broad based introduction to anthropology and act as a springboard into the 200 level “Principles of...” offerings. The second year curriculum would then be composed of foundation courses in each of the three areas of program specialization where students will have the opportunity to experience the breadth and depth of each field and hone in on their particular interests. The thematic focus of third and fourth year level courses would build on the second year offerings, with particular attention to the defining theme of Public Issues Anthropology.

**Status:** Done
Details: ANTH 101 and ANTH 102 were merged into a single first-year course, ANTH 100, as of spring 2014. The second-year courses were streamlined, with three 200-level courses remaining as foundations courses in the three subfields of cultural, archaeological, and biological anthropology. The third and fourth year courses build on the second year offerings, expanding on the fields of expertise of the faculty and the theme of Public Issues Anthropology.

Recommendation 3. That the title and description of “Design of Anthropological Inquiry” (ANTH 300) to reflect its function as a methodologies course and to make it a required course for majors in Anthropology.

Status: Partially Done

Details: The title of ANTH 300 has been changed to “Practicing Anthropology.” However, in accord with the Faculty of Arts initiative to streamline major plans, it has not been made a required course for majors.

Recommendation 4. The review team recommends looking further into the possibility of cross-listing courses with other programs such as Geography so that students (particularly in the biological and archaeology streams) have greater access to training in, for example, GIS, and be able to count these courses as Anthropology credits towards their degrees.

Status: Considered and rejected

Details: As recommended, the department looked into the possibility of cross-listing courses in other programs such as geography. However, the lack of specifically anthropological content in these courses was of some concern. More importantly, the external pressure on the department to ensure high enrollments in upper level courses makes this recommendation impractical and potentially damaging to the department.

Recommendation 5. That a statement of learning objectives be mandatory for each course.

Status: Ongoing

Details: As courses are taught in rotation under the new undergraduate plans, statements of learning objectives are incorporated into the course syllabuses. These reflect the place of the course in the overall program of Anthropology undergraduate plans, and the theme of Public Issues Anthropology.

Recommendation 6. That the faculty complement be expanded with the addition of an anthropological archaeologist

Status: Done
Details:
A new anthropological archaeologist was hired beginning 1 July 2014.

Recommendation 7. That the tenure-track cultural anthropologist seconded to another department be replaced.

Status: Done

Details: A new cultural anthropologist was hired in a joint position with Religious Studies beginning 1 July 2014.

Recommendation 8. That the Definite Term Instructor be renewed or replaced, ideally with a permanent position.

Status: Not done

Details: A search for a permanent replacement for the limited term instructor ended in a failed search. The position has not been renewed.

Recommendation 9. That the teaching load of the faculty be reduced to reflect more typical loads in the faculty of arts.

Status: Done

Details: Beginning in Fall 2013 the teaching load of all tenured and tenure track faculty was reduced to four courses.

Recommendation 10. That the tradition of faculty members offering independent reading courses to students be rethought and probably tightly regulated.

Status: Done

Details: The number of reading courses in the catalogue was reduced from three to one. Students are discouraged from taking reading courses, particularly in lieu of more formal course offerings. Faculty work with students to find ways they can explore their interests within the regular course offerings.
Recommendation 11: The review team recommends that the Anthropology Department abandon the attempt to run on a three-term cycle and instead offer courses in fall and winter, reserving summer for faculty research activities and experiential learning opportunities for students.

Status: Done

Details: The department has never attempted to run on a three-term cycle, and has always offered courses primarily in the fall and winter, reserving summer for faculty research activities and experiential learning opportunities for students. Other than field school, study abroad, and other experiential learning classes, courses offered in the spring term are normally taught only by sessional instructors, unless, in an exceptional case, the research schedule of a regular faculty member would facilitated by teaching in the spring term, leaving fall or winter for research.

Recommendation 12. That the Anthropology Co-op program be discontinued in favour of the Arts and Business Honours Anthropology Co-op program.

Status: Done

Details: As of Fall 2014 no students were enrolled in Anthropology Co-op. Arts and Business Co-op enrollments continue in small numbers.

Recommendation 13. That Distance Education be made a lower priority for the department, and only revived if additional faculty complement and other resources are provided.

Status: Done

Details: As of Fall 2013 the Anthropology Department no longer offer Distance Education courses.

Recommendation 14. That the department be provided with space to create a seminar room, a departmental lounge or gathering space, and that the current undergraduate Anth Society space be enlarged. In addition, the department should be provided with one more office bay, consisting of two faculty offices and one workroom.

Status: Not done
Details: No new space has been made available. Faculty, both full-time and sessional, now have offices in spaces formerly used for storage and workrooms. In addition, with the addition of the new Archaeological Anthropologist, the two biological anthropology teaching and research labs have been combined in order to provide lab space for the archaeologist. This has caused a considerable increase in the time required to completely set up and dismantle lab materials for biological anthropology courses on alternating days, and has severely restricted the use of the lab by students for research and hands-on learning.

Recommendation 15. That the retiring Department Administrative Assistant be replaced.

Status: done

Details: A new Administrative Assistant was hired beginning January 2014.

Respectfully submitted

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