

May 26, 2015

PROFESSOR CAROL PADDEN, Dean
Social Sciences

PROFESSOR THOMAS CSORDAS, Chair
Anthropology

SUBJECT: Undergraduate Program Review for the Department of Anthropology

Dear Professors Padden and Csordas,

The Undergraduate Council has discussed the Anthropology 2015 Undergraduate Program Review. The Council supports the findings and recommendations of the review subcommittee and appreciates the thoughtful and proactive response from the Department. The Council's comments centered on the following:

- **General Challenges.** The Council agreed with the Review Committee's opinion that, despite the lack of resources and faculty shortfall, the Department has made great strides since their last program review in areas of staffing, student-faculty interaction, curriculum updates, and the continued review and revision of web content that will better communicate the Department's rules and policies.
- **Staff Updates.** The Council was pleased to learn that a new MSO was hired since the last review, and efforts have been made to create a more effective working relationship between faculty and staff.
- **Teaching Assistants (TAs).** It was unclear to the Council whether the mention that "TAs may be responsible for up to 50 UG students" meant that the Teaching Assistants had up to 50 students per section, or if the TAs were handling 50 students total, spread out across different sections. Also, it was unclear as to how many sections each TA was responsible for. There was concern that if these TAs were responsible for 50 students in just one section, the load would be too high. The Council was also concerned that if these TAs were responsible for 50 students per section, and were responsible for more than one section, the TA would be overloaded.

The Council will conduct its follow-up review of the Department in Spring Quarter 2016. At that time, our goal is to learn about the Department's progress in implementing the recommendations of the program review subcommittee and the Undergraduate Council. The Council extends its thanks to the Department for its engagement in this process and we look forward to the continued discussion.

Sincerely,

Leslie Carver, Chair
Undergraduate Council

cc: G. Boss R. Continetti G. Cook R. Rodriguez B. Sawrey M. Sidney

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A. *A brief description and analysis of the department*

Since last review in 2005/06, the department has successfully re-organized and established three undergraduate majors, (1) archeology, (2) sociocultural anthropology and (3) biological anthropology. A core three-course sequence in anthropology was established for all majors, and is also attended by non-majors. More courses in research methods, design, and opportunities for hands on research were added, especially in archaeology. The department adopted specific measures to increase faculty-student interactions and is better connected with colleges and external programs.

In recent years, the numbers of undergraduate majors in Anthropology have fallen, although this is a University wide issue for all social science majors, not only anthropology. Furthermore, the department has suffered due to the loss of faculty members (either for retirement or for departures to other universities). This faculty turnover and shortfalls in particular specialties affected the breadth and consistency of course offerings which have been uneven. Currently, 65% of classes are taught by ladder-ranked faculty members and 35% by lecturers.

Overall, however, the department is on a good trajectory and we observed a sense of excitement among the faculty members about current hiring and future directions for expansion. Faculty members care seriously about undergraduate education for all their students and are interested in recruiting and retaining majors. There is a sense of teamwork and collegiality that was also clear from how forthcoming everybody from the department was in our discussions during the site visit. This atmosphere is particularly noteworthy given the fact that many anthropology departments experience conflict related to differences in the sub-fields of cultural anthropology, archeology, and biological anthropology. Finally, but not least, given the small size of the department, Anthropology has a strong profile of participation in programs and initiatives on campus outside of the department.

B. *Analysis of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Curriculum*

Overall, the committee was impressed by the achievements of the department and congratulates them on the significant progress made since last review:

(i) The department has restructured the curriculum such that students in each of the specific majors have a clear path to successful graduation. (ii) Furthermore, each major has re-organized available courses to support the development of the three majors. In addition, the department has renumbered all the courses and removed complicated prefixes so that students are able to easily identify classes required for each major. (iii) The department has conducted a faculty retreat to discuss the long term plans/directions for the department including the area(s) of new hires. (iv) Faculty are deeply engaged in Service to the campus, including teaching courses that meet general education requirements of the University and teaching in several interdisciplinary programs. (v) The department was entrepreneurial in supporting the development at Eleanor Roosevelt College of a Global Health Minor, an emerging field of interest, which rapidly gained popularity with students. In 2014, it was converted to an interdisciplinary Global Health Major, administered by the Anthropology Department. Faculty members in the department are also central to the maintenance of the Human Rights Minor.

The number of majors has dropped since 2010 academic year which is partly a reflection of national trends, partly due to the changes in UC and UCSD, and partly because of staff shortfalls and lack of consistent and sufficient course offerings caused by shortage and losses of faculty. Significantly, declining majors since AY2010 is a problem that anthropology shares with most other UCSD social science and humanities departments and programs.

1. General Organization: Challenges and Opportunities

The department has suffered from understaffing along with a great deal of upheaval due to budget cuts and sharing staff with other departments. In addition it lost an MSO with thirty years of experience and a long-standing chair. The committee is particularly concerned about what appears to be a lack of communication and strained relations between faculty and staff. The area of course-scheduling appears to be a crucial bottleneck that needs to be addressed. A new MSO is coming on board and the department chair is also new so there is an opportunity as well as a challenge to establish processes and protocols of communication among faculty, staff, and students, practices of departmental record-keeping, and otherwise lay the groundwork for the smooth operation of the department and collegial relations among all parties.

2. Faculty

(i) Ladder rank faculty: Since 2005/6, the department has lost five faculty members and added four new ones. The department needs additional faculty to meet the curricular needs of its three undergraduate majors. Specifically, among the three majors, biological anthropology has been severely impacted because it has been at 2.3 members. In addition one of the influential faculty members retired in 2010 and has yet to be replaced. Sociocultural Anthropology lost two senior faculty members in the last two years while it serves the largest number of majors.

To ensure the functioning of the three majors and an equitable division of labor and resources across them additional hiring is recommended. Social (part of sociocultural) and archaeology have been roughly stable in the past decade. Bringing the department to 15 faculty members with 5 faculty members for each major would be enough for the department to function as a stable and efficient enterprise.

The department has filled one position to start In July 2015, and has two searches still underway. A new hire in the area of the Epigenetic Anthropology will ameliorate the worst shortfall, increasing Biological Anthropology from 2.3 to 3.3 FTE. The Dean has approved carrying forward to the next AY a search for a position in the anthropology of race and racisms, which would add to the biological anthropology faculty. The department is administratively preparing an offer for a hire in global health and psychological/medical anthropology, also adding to the sociocultural faculty (at the undergraduate level psychological/medical is combined with social). Marine archaeology is a position they hope to develop in connection with SIO and the EVCAA's cross-divisional hiring initiative. The committee also recommends establishing plans for the replacement of near future retirement of faculty members.

As the department moves towards making up faculty shortfalls, it might consider including more electives for each major from courses offered in other UCSD departments to help meet curricular needs. This is especially a consideration for Biological Anthropology. Active efforts to establish dialogues with other departments across the campus should be continued.

Finally, it should be recognized that many Anthropology faculty members actively participate in service for the university. For example, they teach courses offered by other departments (including some with very large enrollments), and courses offered by the Anthropology department serve students besides Anthropology majors. This is clear from the fact that, despite the recent decline in anthropology majors since AY2010, anthropology enrollments have increased by 22%, in part due to its deliberate policy of offering diversity, equity and inclusion courses; and the involvement in the Global Health Minor/Major and the Human Rights Minor.

(ii) **Visiting Instructors:** Visiting faculty and lecturers teach one-third of upper-division courses and are essential to the program. The lecturers we met with were generally satisfied with their experience. There were concerns expressed on behalf of students about not enough electives for majors to complete their requirements, and about the absence of lab space for undergraduate teaching. This is especially a constraint for Biological Anthropology. We were surprised to hear that lecturers were unable to find the syllabi of courses offered in the past, complicating their course preparation. During the last session of our review, faculty told us that there are files of past syllabi, but their location may not be known by more recent staff. We urge that syllabi be more diligently maintained and made readily available, and that new syllabi are consistently added to the record. That way all sectors of the department, including current faculty and

students, but especially lecturers, visiting faculty, and TAs are better able to form coherent and informed curricular offerings.

(iii) **Teaching Assistants:** Teaching assistants (TAs) are Ph.D. graduate students in anthropology. Prior to the start of classes, new TAs attend a mandatory training at the Center for Teaching Development orientation, which seems to be helpful. In addition, some TAs receive specific training or guidelines from the faculty in charge of a class. TAs expressed concerns about the wide variation in faculty expectations from the TA and about class sizes. Depending upon the class, TAs may be responsible for up to 50 UG students and this limits the individual mentoring and interaction that can take place. TAs expressed concerns about shortfalls in English proficiency among some in the growing population of international students, and about the apparent lack of UCSD orientation for such students regarding the different cultural style of American undergraduate education.

3. Curriculum

Since the last review, the department has established a new consolidated core sequence that can serve as an introduction to the three major tracks. An outstanding feature of the department is the opportunity for students to experience hands on research in labs and in study abroad opportunities organized by faculty. UG students expressed the need to expand these opportunities so that more students can get this training. Faculty members would like to meet student demand, but the number of TAs available limits them from increasing enrollments. In addition the department lacks laboratory classrooms. While there are some logistical issues to be solved and additional resources needed, the committee encourages the department to continue to expand their hands-on experiences offered to students. The needs are different for each of the three majors because of the kinds of research associated with archeology, biological anthropology and sociocultural anthropology.

For each major, currently:

(i) Archaeology-----Nine courses including those in field schools, archaeology study abroad programs and digital and cyber archaeology are established.

(ii) Sociocultural Anthropology--- There are some gaps in the course offerings. Ethnographic Methods, a cornerstone of cultural anthropology is not included among the courses offered. This class should be added to the curriculum. It is important training for the majors and it may also appeal to students from outside the major who want research training. Such a course could be used to provide the sociocultural majors with hands on research experiences that now are limited to archeology and biology. Faculty mentioned and we agree that coverage of economic anthropology should be considered. It is important in the discipline and also may serve to attract majors and other students who may see it as relevant to their career interests.

(iii) Biological Anthropology—Comparative Brain Methods (ANBI112) is offered. Some courses could have a laboratory component, but mostly due to lack of space, no methods courses are being offered at this point, except one that accommodates a small number of students. Both UG students and TAs commented independently that the Biological Anthropology majors do not have enough upper division courses to take to graduate. While waivers are granted in many cases so that students can graduate in time, they are not getting the proper training in their major and will be at a disadvantage when compared to the Biological Anthropology majors graduated from other universities. Both faculty and students want to continue the biological anthropology major and the committee agrees.

The department once specialized in sociocultural anthropology but reorganized to provide the additional majors in archaeology and biological anthropology. These majors attract undergraduate applicants wishing to pursue those specific majors rather than a general anthropology major. The department's academic profile is intellectually sound and can attract prospective and actual majors. The department's self-study recommends that the biological anthropology major be simplified and we support that recommendation. The department recognizes the problems caused by lack of course offerings and we are confident that they will seriously consider and pursue measures to reduce student dissatisfaction with the biological

major (such as the hiring of visiting instructors and/or the inclusion of appropriate electives from the Biology Division).

The lower-division core consists of three nonsequential courses, one on each of the three majors. It is required of all anthropology majors and also provides introductory access to anthropology for non-majors. This seems to work well and we encountered no adverse comments about the lower-division core during our review.

The committee has the following suggestions for strengthening the course offerings and for attracting students and majors:

(i) Developing new classes, in particular adding Ethnographic Methods, and considering additional courses in Economic Anthropology and Globalization to round out the curriculum and bring offerings up to date. Environmental Anthropology is a possible area for expansion that would build on the department's existing strengths.

(ii) Consider developing some certificates that students can earn in addition to the major by taking a series of courses on a theme, such as medical anthropology, anthropology of gender, Latin American anthropology, etc.

(iii) Many courses include a writing component, but there is a need for opportunities for students to write more substantial research papers.

(iv) The Honors Thesis program has strengthened faculty-student interaction, and has many other benefits as reported in the self-study. We ask that the department consider revisions to improve access to the program. Currently it requires a 3.9 GPA. This may be too limiting. In addition, students, particularly transfer students, need to be informed about the honors program early enough for them to be able to take advantage of it.

4. Students

All undergraduate students were invited to our review. We heard from two, one a fourth-year and one a new transfer student. Each was passionately interested in the topic of anthropology, and each was generally happy with their educational experience at UCSD. We asked them directly, and they answered that they found faculty accessible and helpful. They were satisfied with the number and variety of courses, but also said it was sometimes hard to plan coursework because of a lack of information about future offerings. Teaching Assistants reported to us that a common student complaint is the lack of sufficient courses to choose from. This affects some majors more than other as we have already discussed.

In addition to limited student testimony we looked at formal student surveys provided by the Dean of Undergraduate Education. Over five years, the mean "would recommend instructor" CAPE student rating for anthropology courses was 94%. The number speaks for itself.

Data from the UC Undergraduate Experiences Survey on UCSD Anthropology compared to all other UC anthropology departments showed high satisfaction. UCSD Anthropology was not significantly different from All-Other-UC across about three dozen items, including:

- Variety of courses in your major (UCSD 69, Other 70)
- Quality of lower-division courses (UCSD 79, Other 82)
- Quality of upper-division courses (UCSD 80, Other 87)
- Quality of faculty instruction (UCSD 95, Other 94)
- Quality of TA instruction (UCSD 85, Other 90)

UCSD is meaningfully higher than average in this:

- Access to small classes (UCSD 74, Other 64)

This is an important strength of the anthropology department that should be maintained.

The most salient problem in UCSD Anthropology acknowledged by the department and mentioned by its constituencies is not enough electives to satisfy major requirements. That problem is unevenly distributed, however, which perhaps explains this survey finding:

- Availability of courses needed for graduation (UCSD 76, Other 72)

UCSD Anthropology is meaningfully lower than average on these two items

- Are department rules and policies clearly communicated? (UCSD 58, Other 76)
- Is the description of the major in the catalog accurate? (UCSD 57, UC Other 81)

If these data are correct, they indicate that UCSD anthropology students are as satisfied with availability of courses as anthropology students elsewhere in UC, but are much less satisfied with the clarity of requirements. They are as satisfied as other UC students with faculty advising, peer advising, and staff advising. The department should investigate the hypothesis that stronger clarity and communication of requirements would reduce student dissatisfaction.

Our two undergraduate witnesses wanted more information about careers and graduate study for anthropologists, and lecturers reported this concern among undergraduates as well. In fact, the undergraduate director surveyed UCSD anthropology graduates as a part of efforts to encourage increased majors and overall enrollment in anthropology. This survey revealed that many UCSD anthropology graduates are working in a variety of desirable occupations. Information like this should be made available on the departmental website. We encourage the department to consider further ways to assure prospective and actual majors about career opportunities (success stories about graduates, more prominent display and distribution of AAA career materials, annual Jobs for Anthropologists fair, and the like). Students also wanted more information and guidance on graduate school opportunities.

Students and faculty interaction seems generally good in the anthropology department. There is an Anthropology Club at UCSD, and research opportunities and study abroad bring some faculty and students together. Both undergraduate students and TAs on the behalf of undergraduates expressed a desire to be included in more departmental events and to mix more with graduate students. One TA said that the architecture (a broken series of long hallways) interferes with attaining a community atmosphere.

5. Staff

During the 2007-2009 recession the department staff was reduced and administration was combined with Sociology and Latin American studies. Around the same time the department lost the longstanding MSO and other staff who managed well but with minimal formal procedures and keeping of records. Shared administration was an unhappy arrangement. The chair and the faculty are managing the stress, recruiting new hires, successfully pursuing large initiatives (e.g., Global Health Major), and they participated in the undergraduate review although they could have justified postponement. They produced an impressive self-study for the undergraduate review. However, shared administration, together with the recent administrative turmoil in the department, has created several widely-acknowledged problems. From staff, faculty, and TAs independently, we heard that the scheduling of classes is not smooth. In extreme cases, changes in scheduling of classes had to be made shortly before the quarter start dates. In addition, both staff and students told us that staff advising of students is inadequate due to the insufficient numbers of staff. The review committee also observed on its own gaps in the information available on the department website and students mentioned uncertainty about how to schedule advising and a lack of information about careers and graduate school options.

As of a week before the date of our review the department had hired its own MSO and the committee expects that alone will help to improve some of these situations. However, given the current problems, and taking advantage of the current unique situation where both the chair and MSO are new, the key personnel should consider arranging for formal outside advice and training in order to ensure the building of a smooth and professional relationship and to create a cooperative leadership team. Finally, we recommend that appropriate staff and the MSO should be included in faculty meetings (to be present at least for part of each meeting, if not the entire meeting) in order to facilitate better communication.

6. Colleges and Programs

The department offers undergraduate courses outside the department:

- Making of the Modern World, Roosevelt College
- Culture, Art, and Technology, Sixth College

- International Studies Program
- Human Rights, Minor, Roosevelt College
- The Human Development Program
- The prior Global Health Minor and the new Global Health Program

These amount to about 750 annual enrollments in recent years.

The Human Development program allows several lower- and upper-level anthropology courses to satisfy its requirements. One anthropology faculty teaches in the HDP core, an additional three are affiliated faculty. Some anthropology courses also count in the Program in the Study of Religion and in Judaic Studies. An anthropology faculty member is a founder and Co-Director of the Human Rights Program and Minor. Anthropology courses are also taught in International Studies and in area studies programs. Department members supported the formation of the Global Health Minor at Roosevelt College, which converted to an interdisciplinary Global Health Program and major in 2014. The Program is headquartered at Anthropology and is chaired by the current Anthropology chair. Three anthropology faculty members teach courses in the GHP including one of its upper-division core courses; and six anthropology courses are possible electives in GHP. The GHP increases anthropology enrollments directly and indirectly by familiarizing anthropology non-majors with the discipline.

In order to increase awareness among students that these courses offered by the anthropology department are very good for their general education, the department should consult more often with all colleges.

7. Campus and University Policies

The Anthropology Department has been losing undergraduate majors since AY2010, as have 10 out of 12 social science departments or programs, and humanities departments as well. This is also a general trend in the United States since the Great Recession of 2007-2009. Several factors for the decline include (i) comparatively impoverished students with higher loan burdens and more uncertain futures and thus, opting for seemingly more marketable majors, (ii) the composition of the student body, specifically, the decline of Cal State and community college transfers while the increase in out-of-state and international admissions. This shift specifically sets back topics like anthropology or philosophy which students first encounter in college or community college rather than high school. International students, in addition, may be less knowledgeable about the existence of or less interested in majoring in social sciences or humanities.

We concur with the view expressed in the department's self-study, that making anthropology (and similar departments) more attractive to students "will require a commitment on the part of the university to make UC San Diego more attractive to students outside of science and technology fields."

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