

WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM
FACULTY RESPONSE TO THE USHE BOARD OF REGENTS
FIVE-YEAR REVIEW EVALUATION TEAM REPORT

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Compiled by

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Full-time faculty members of the Weber State University Anthropology Program have reviewed the evaluation team's recommendations, and our collective response is as follows (see the Five-Year Review for the review team's original recommendations):

General Evaluation: We tend to agree with this positive evaluation and note that during the Spring 2022 semester we hired a linguistic anthropologist which means we now employ a faculty member from all four subdisciplines of Anthropology. We strive for academic rigor in our classes as noted by the reviewers. Our move to the newly renovated Lindquist Hall provides us with excellent office space, classrooms, technology and an extensive archaeology lab and biological anthropology lab.

Mission Statement: Clearly our activities and goals are in basic alignment with our Mission Statement. Being a service program with multiple general education courses means that adjuncts and faculty spend a good deal of their teaching time with non-majors. As noted in the report, our program offers courses which fulfill four different General Education requirements, which is more than many programs on campus and which increases the assessment burden for the program. However, we feel that the implementation of our revised program assessment plan will improve and streamline this process. All our courses draw on anthropological values such as diversity of thought, and appreciation of political, religious and biological diversity around the planet. Our new Capstone course, the new Technical Skills in Anthropology course, and teaching Anthropology 3500 as an applied course should help bring more career content to the upper division classes.

Curriculum: The faculty agree that there needs to be further discussion in order to work towards an established curriculum for the Capstone class, and planning to integrate the assessment of our revised program learning outcomes within the course. In addition to the mentoring of capstone projects in the four subfields of anthropology by faculty with relevant expertise, we believe that a

shared core for the capstone curriculum should revolve around the preparation of students for academic and non-academic careers. We also understand that a good BIS track in Anthropology may need to exceed 18 hours credit.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment: As mentioned by the reviewers, and stated in our most recent program review, the Anthropology faculty will be revising our assessment plan and learning outcomes to better align with the current values of the department and faculty. We plan to begin this process soon and hope to have it completed in the coming academic year.

Advising: Our use of Starfish has dramatically increased through the COVID years. We suggest that the initial Starfish reports be moved back a week so that most classes will have had at least one major test in order to see student problems and report them on Starfish. Advising has improved and we hope to use the Capstone to improve it further as a means of gathering data for assessment and keeping better track of graduates. In addition, in the coming year faculty will be adjusting the course sequence and required classes in the Archaeology Track to better prepare students for future careers.

Faculty/Staff: As recognized by the review team, the department chair, and the dean; the Anthropology faculty concur with the need for a faculty member with a linguistic anthropology focus. To help meet this need, we made it a priority of our most recent faculty search to hire a linguistic anthropologist with a cultural anthropology secondary emphasis. Our new faculty hire (Dr. Abigail Mack) meets these requirements and will help take some of the pressure off of our adjunct pool, while expanding our linguistic anthropology offerings. We also agree with the review team's assessment that adjunct faculty wages are not competitive. While the Anthropology program has no direct ability to increase adjunct pay, we highly encourage the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (CSBS) and the University to make fair compensation for adjuncts a top priority, and would be pleased to see CSBS reports on these efforts in the future.

We also agree with the review team that a fairer compensation for faculty who teach field programs is warranted. As with adjunct pay, while the Anthropology program has no direct ability to make such a change, we would encourage CSBS and the University to make fair compensation in the form of supplemental pay or course releases a priority (in consultation with the Anthropology faculty), and would be pleased to see CSBS reports on these efforts in the future.

The majority of our students pursue the General Anthropology track, and the bulk of our lower and upper division classes are in sociocultural anthropology. This is quite a burden on one faculty member so we definitely agree that our next hire should be a cultural anthropologist with a specialty in applied Anthropology. Given the general education service that our department does, and the breadth of Anthropology as a discipline, a six person faculty would be desirable.

The Anthropology program also strongly agrees with the evaluation team in recognizing that our administrative assistant (currently Belinda McElheny) should be more fairly compensated for the large amount of work and numerous responsibilities she is tasked with. This includes budgeting and coordination of multiple program accounts, internal *and* external grants, two university laboratories, multiple Study Abroad programs, local and national guest speakers, and importantly - assisting and serving two separate academic programs within one department. Given this heavy workload, and in accordance with the evaluation team's recognition, we recommend that the administrative assistant for the department be set to Administrative Specialist III; or barring that, ensure that she receives the maximum pay within the Administrative Specialist II pay range.

External Communities: We have excellent external relationships mostly through Archaeology and agree that we should look for relationships and internship opportunities for students that include the other three anthropological disciplines. We plan on furthering our efforts in this regard in the future.

Implementation of Recommendations from Previous Reviews: We feel we have adequately met the 2017 goals.

Program Level Recommendations: We concur with these observations. In brief response to each:

1. Anthropology faculty will collaborate to develop learning outcomes and a basic outline for the new senior capstone seminar to be used by all faculty who teach the class.
2. As new or replacement hires occur, faculty will be cognizant of the need to hire anthropologists with a primary or secondary emphasis in cultural anthropology, to allow us to continue to offer a holistic and balanced four-field education to our students.
3. While a temporary solution of compensation for archaeology field school instructors has been implemented (through an association with Study Abroad), we agree that the college and university should seek a long term permanent solution (in consultation with the department and faculty).
4. As recommended, in the future faculty will collaborate to determine which courses are rarely or no longer taught and need to be removed from the catalog and will begin the program discontinuance process for the Archaeological Technician Associate of Applied Science and the Archaeological Technician Institutional Certificate. Concurrent to the reviewer's recommendation, faculty are already in the process of applying for permanent course numbers for biological anthropology courses that are now being taught as special topics (since these courses will be taught regularly in the future).
5. Finally, we agree that more public outreach may be helpful to enhance the department's public profile and attract more students. We will continue our public outreach of engaging students and the public through departmental programs such as the Anthropology Club, the Student Research Conference, and publicity and volunteer

opportunities associated with archaeological excavations; through university activities such as WSU's Block Party and Purple Carpet events; and by considering new outreach to high schools in the area.

We consider this 5 Year review to have been insightful and helpful as we produce great classes and experiences for our students and serious research from our faculty.