

SUNY Potsdam
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan- Department of Anthropology

Department Name:
ANTHROPOLOGY

Date Submitted and Academic Year: Fall 2009, AY 2009-2010

Department Mission Statement:

The mission of the Anthropology Department at SUNY Potsdam is to provide students with knowledge of the five fields of anthropology and to give them practical experience in communities so that they can approach the world professionally and anthropologically.

Faculty Member Completing this Form: ALAN HERSKER

Update on prior years' "Application of Assessment Results:
N/A

Intended Student Learning Outcome #1

Student will demonstrate fundamental anthropological knowledge.

Connection to Univ/Dept Mission and other programs/departments

- direct correlation between the college's commitment to "liberal arts and sciences as an academic foundation for all students" and "an appreciation of and respect for the variety of human experience"
- direct correlation between the department's mission to "provide student with knowledge of the five fields of anthropology" and the student learning outcome
- courses required for all majors fulfill SB, LB, SA, SI, WI, XC General Education designators
- anthropology courses also fulfill requirements for the interdisciplinary majors of Environmental Studies, Environmental Sciences, Africana Studies, Native American Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, Museum Studies, and Student-Initiated Interdepartmental Majors

Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)

- a) explain the role that culture plays in human behavior and adaptation
- b) analyze culture change, culture contact and culture conflict on a local, regional and global level
- c) outline the different components of culture and how they interact
- d) analyze and interpret the components of language and the role that language plays in cultural interaction
- e) describe the eras and processes of human prehistory
- f) explain the basic tenets of biocultural evolution
- g) describe the history of anthropological theory

Data Source/Results & Analysis

DIRECT

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- student performance on shared assignments
- student performance on common examination questions

INDIRECT

- N/A

Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

1. the instructors from the 200-level courses required for the major (i.e., ANTH 201, 202, 203, 204) should identify specific shared assignments in their courses that meet one or more of the criteria. These assignments should be archived for analysis.
 2. the instructors for each 200-level course required for the major should develop a set of common questions administered in exams that demonstrate student mastery of core anthropological concepts. These data should be archived for analysis.
 3. data are needed to assess student understanding of the history of anthropological theory
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STATUS UPDATE (NOV 2009) on Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

1. ANTH 201: Instructors have identified assignments that meet outcome criteria and data will be collected the next time the course is offered in Spring 2010. ANTH 202: Assignments have been identified and data collected for Spring 2009. Data will be collected in this and subsequent semesters. ANTH 203/204: No assignments have been identified and no data collected.
2. Discussion is ongoing for the development of a common question bank for each 200-level required course. Implementation is planned for Fall of 2010.
3. Data assessing student understanding of the history of anthropological theory will be collected in ANTH 391 Anthropological Theory and Method. The department has submitted a plan to restructure our major requirements and revise several of the required courses. We have proposed changing ANTH 391 Theory and Method to ANTH 391 Anthropological Theory. Course outcomes will then need to be revised and data sources identified after the revision is approved. Expected date of completion is in Fall 2010 with implementation in Spring 2011.

Intended Student Learning Outcome #2

Students will demonstrate ability to access anthropological data and information.

Connection to Univ/Dept Mission and other programs/departments

- direct correlation with college's emphasis on critical thought and discovery as well as the liberal arts and sciences as an academic foundation
- direct correlation with department's emphasis on providing students with anthropological research skills

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- contributes to General Education requirements (AC, FC, FS, FW, LB, PI, SA, SB, SI, WC, WI, XC)
- contributes directly to Information Literacy knowledge and skills

Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)

- a) explain how anthropological knowledge is organized and how format affects how it is accessed and evaluated
- b) identify appropriate anthropological databases, library catalogs, publications, data sets and other sources and evaluate information based on reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, point of view and bias
- c) identify and articulate an appropriate anthropological research topic and the corresponding information need
- d) demonstrate an understanding of the ethical use of information
- e) interpret the visual data displayed in maps, charts, graphs, images and objects

Data Source/Results & Analysis

DIRECT

- student-authored review of scholarly material from a 300-level ANTH course
- one (1) of the following:
 - student research-based project from a 400-level ANTH course
 - ANTH 491 Research Project Proposal
 - ANTH 480 Research Project

INDIRECT

- (proposed) Departmental Survey of Graduates

Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

1. Anthropology department assessment coordinator, in cooperation with the department chair, should develop the guidelines and process by which direct assessment measure data can be easily collected, collated, stored and analyzed.
2. Anthropology department assessment coordinator, in cooperation with the faculty, should develop the format and process for an annual Survey of Graduates

STATUS UPDATE (NOV 2009) on Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

1. The Assessment Coordinator is in the process of identifying appropriate sources and establishing collection protocols.
 2. Survey of Graduates is under development along with plans for departmental participation in the National Survey of Student Satisfaction.
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Intended Student Learning Outcome #3

Students will demonstrate ability to apply anthropological knowledge practically and theoretically.

Connection to Univ/Dept Mission and other programs/departments

- direct correlation of college's commitment to preparing students to "act as engaged global citizens" and to our "sense of responsibility to our region and our world"
- direct correlation to the department's emphasis on giving student practical experiences as well as developing professional and anthropological skills.

Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)

- a) integrate at least two anthropological subdisciplines
- b) study anthropologically one's own cultural practices, values and beliefs
- c) interpret some aspect of a culture other than the one's own for an audience of one's peers
- d) examine ethical dilemmas using anthropological principles
- e) interpret qualitative data
- f) interpret quantitative data
- g) apply anthropological method and theory to a contemporary issue or client's need
- h) design a study yielding primary data using anthropological methods

Data Source/Results & Analysis

DIRECT

- ANTH 391 research proposal
- student research-based project from a 400-level ANTH course
- ANTH 480 Research Project
- ANTH 480 Practicum Presentation

INDIRECT

- (proposed) Departmental Survey of Graduates

Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

Additional direct data are needed here for several of the measurable criteria (specifically a, e, f).

STATUS UPDATE (NOV 2009) on Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

1. Beginning in Spring 2010, project proposals will be collected in ANTH 391. Practicum presentations for ANTH 480 will be collected. Project write-ups for ANTH 480 will be collected, although as group projects, they must be considered carefully.
2. Proposed revisions to the major (adding lab components to all 200-level introductory courses) will provide assessment data for criteria e and f. Implementation of labs is expected in Fall 2010 or Spring 2011.

Intended Student Learning Outcome #4

Students will demonstrate ability to create and disseminate anthropological knowledge.

Connection to Univ/Dept Mission and other programs/departments

- direct correlation with departmental emphasis on preparing students as anthropological professionals with practical experience in real-world communities
- corresponds to General Education SI and WI requirements
- contributes directly to Information Literacy knowledge and skills

Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)

- a) formulate a hypothesis and evaluate the means of testing it
- b) choose a communication medium, format and style that uses appropriate technology and supports the purposes of the product, the audience and the setting
- c) critically and self-reflexively assess their position in the production of anthropological knowledge
- d) use recognized rhetorical techniques to support a thesis
- e) create well-structured and well-written documents that demonstrate the effective use of anthropological data and information and that use content, paraphrasing and quotations in a way that supports the purposes and format of the product
- f) cite sources using an appropriate documentation style
- g) construct a well-crafted and effective documents and presentations, including summaries, book reviews, research papers and posters, grant proposals, resumes, annotated bibliographies and speeches

Data Source/Results & Analysis

DIRECT

- sample of written work from a 300- or 400-level ANTH course
- ANTH 391 Project Proposal

INDIRECT

- National Survey of Student Satisfaction
- (proposed) Departmental Survey of Graduates

Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

Additional direct data are needed here for several of the measurable criteria, specifically b, c, and g.

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STATUS UPDATE (NOV 2009) on Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

1. The Assessment Coordinator is in the process of identifying appropriate sources and establishing collection protocols.
 2. Survey of Graduates is under development along with plans for departmental participation in the National Survey of Student Satisfaction.
 3. Direct assessment data for criteria b, c, and g still need to be identified.
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Intended Student Learning Outcome #5

Students will demonstrate ability to integrate the experiences that will enable them to approach the world professionally and anthropologically.

Connection to Univ/Dept Mission and other programs/department

- direct correlation of college's commitment to preparing students to "act as engaged global citizens", to our "sense of responsibility to our region and our world" and to "an appreciation of and respect for the variety of human experience"
- direct correlation with departmental mission statement
- corresponds to General Education XC, WC and WI requirements

Measurable Criteria and Assessment Method(s)

- a) evaluate an ethnographic study of a culture other than their own
- b) evaluate a book or report based on archaeological investigation
- c) produce a reflective evaluation of an interaction with members of a culture other than their own
- d) gather and analyze data using appropriate technology (for example, digital recorder, total station, GIS, NVivo, SPSS)
- e) demonstrate basic computer skills needed to find, create, apply and communicate anthropological information (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- f) work 1:1 or in a small group with a faculty member on an independent study, project, internship or assistantship

Data Source/Results & Analysis

DIRECT

- common assignment for ANTH 202
- common assignment for ANTH 204
- culminating project from one (1) of the following: ANTH 315, 316, 320, 359, 392, 403, 410, 415, 416, 430, 457, 470, 475, 490, 491
- ANTH 480 Practicum Presentation

INDIRECT

- (proposed) Departmental Survey of Graduates

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Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

A data source is needed for assessing student proficiency at gathering and analyzing data.

STATUS UPDATE (NOV 2009) on Application of Results/Action Plan for Improvement

1. The department has submitted proposed revisions to the major. Part of this restructuring will add lab sections to all 200-level courses in which students gather and analyze qualitative and quantitative data.
2. The Assessment Coordinator is in the process of identifying appropriate sources and establishing collection protocols

Summary of Action Plans for 2009-2010

1. Data are needed to assess student understanding of core anthropological concepts. The instructors from the 200-level courses required for the major (i.e., ANTH 201, 202, 203, 204) should identify specific shared assignments in their courses that meet one or more of the criteria. Additionally, the instructors for each 200-level course required for the major should develop a set of common questions that are administered in exams and that demonstrate student mastery of core anthropological concepts. These data (assignments and question responses) should be archived for analysis.

2. Additional direct data are needed for several of the measurable criteria, specifically:

- describe the history of anthropological theory
- integrate at least two anthropological subdisciplines
- choose a communication medium, format and style that uses appropriate technology and supports the purposes of the product, the audience and the setting
- critically and self-reflexively assess their position in the production of anthropological knowledge
- construct a well-crafted and effective documents and presentations, including summaries, book reviews, research papers and posters, grant proposals, resumes, annotated bibliographies and speeches
- student proficiency at gathering and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data.

The department assessment coordinator will work with instructors in the required courses to identify appropriate assignments to use as direct measures.

3. The anthropology department assessment coordinator, in cooperation with the department chair, should develop the guidelines and process by which direct assessment measure data can be easily collected, collated and analyzed.

4. The department should begin planning a Departmental Survey of Graduates to be administered each spring beginning in Spring 2010.

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Additional Updates for AY 2009-2010

In addition to the updates until each Student Learning Outcome:

1. students in ANTH 430 (Fall 2009 semester), as a class project on research methods, are collecting qualitative and quantitative data from junior and senior anthropology majors gauging mastery of the department goals and objectives; these students will present their report to the department
2. data from 2008 anthropology graduates had been entered into the updated Courses / Outcomes spreadsheet and reviewed by the department. This data has also been presented to the campus assessment committee.
3. as part of the department's process of "closing the loop", each of the instructors who taught one of the previous semester's required courses-for-majors will present their assessment data, rubrics and exemplars at one of our weekly department meetings for comment and discussion