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Anthropolgy Discipline Goals and Methods 2009

Assessment of Student Learning Committee

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Anthropology Discipline

UNIT MISSION/GOAL(S)

1. The anthropology curriculum (with support from sociology courses) is designed to acquaint students with the concerns, theories, and methods of the discipline that deals with providing a comparative understanding of the range of human cultures and societies throughout the world in both humanistic and scientific terms. Anthropology is also concerned with biological variation among human populations and with human evolution, including the development of the human capacity for creating and acquiring culture.
2. In addition to gaining familiarity with--and competency in--anthropology as a science, students are expected to understand how human values relate broadly to the theories, methods, and data of the field, including respect for both non-Western and Western cultures.
3. The courses are designed to meet the GER and other needs of liberal arts students, as well as sociology majors and students preparing for graduate schools.

Unit Mission/goal(s) and the Institutional Mission Relation

The Morris campus has, among its mission goals,

1. providing a quality liberal arts education
2. education students to appraise values
3. And, a General Education Requirement including proficiency in writing, an understanding of human behavior, social processes and institutions (SS), human diversity (HDiv), an understanding of human groups and their interaction with their environment (Envt), a knowledge of different cultures including an international perspective (IP), and an understanding of ethical and civic responsibility (E/CR). In order to incorporate more of our subdisciplines, we offer a course on scientific investigation of human origins (Sci-L).

Concerning #1, anthropology requires students to know basic data, theoretical perspectives, and methods for interpreting and evaluation the concerns, theories, and methods of the field; the development of analytical skills is central to our mission. As to item #2 (and E/CR), our program repeatedly explores the values of our own and other societies or cultures, the social consequences of these values, and the degree to which declared values are actually enacted or, in fact, evaded. Simultaneously, we teach students to examine how values influence the alternative theoretical perspectives in anthropology, as well as how students' personal values affect their reception to the data and perspectives of our discipline. As to item #3, with every course incorporating materials on social institutions, and/or different cultures (including non-Western cultures), these central concerns of the general education program are integral to the anthropology discipline as well as to a liberal arts education. Several of our courses explore the relationships between human groups and their social and physical environments. Physical anthropology addresses scientific understanding of human diversity, including human genetics, primatology, and human evolution, along with laboratory experiences.

We place considerable emphasis on writing in all of our courses, including (to a lesser degree,

generally) the largest ones.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED OUTCOMES, ASSESSMENT METHODS & TOOLS, TIMELINE

Learning Objective 1

Awareness of the range of knowledge (data, theories, and methods) in the anthropology discipline.

Expected Outcome 1

Successful completion of the major, which is designed to include several courses in specific subject areas of anthropology, one course each in introductory cultural anthropology, physical anthropology, methodology, and theory, and an individual project which serves as a capstone experience in requiring each student to utilize and evaluate the theories and methodologies appropriate to analyzing a particular social or cultural problem.

Method(s), Measure(s), and Instrument(s) for Expected Outcome 1

Evaluations procedures in each course, and the capstone Independent project.

Timeline for the Outcome 1

Starting Date for the Implementation: In Progress

Anticipated Date for the First Results: In Progress

Learning Objective 2

Prepare interested students for graduate school in anthropology and other areas such as international relations.

Expected Outcome 2

Admission to and successful functioning in and completion of graduate programs.

Method(s), Measure(s), and Instrument(s) for Expected Outcome 2

Admission to and success in graduate programs; prior to that, evaluation of student's performance, as in #1.

Timeline for the Outcome 2

Starting Date for the Implementation: In Progress

Anticipated Date for the First Results: In Progress

Learning Objective 3

Competence in utilizing anthropological and sociological theories and methods in analyzing specific problems.

Expected Outcome 3

Independent project and successful integration of graduates in rapidly changing and diverse society.

Method(s), Measure(s), and Instrument(s) for Expected Outcome 3

Evaluation of performance in individual courses (through examination, papers, discussion in class, individual discussions), and evaluation of ongoing progress in independent project and or completed project.

Timeline for the Outcome 3

Starting Date for the Implementation: In Progress

Anticipated Date for the First Results: In Progress

Learning Objective 4

An understanding of the relationship between values and ethics of anthropological (and sociological) knowledge.

Expected Outcome 4

Ability to make informed, careful, and reasoned decisions in complex human situations.

Method(s), Measure(s), and Instrument(s) for Expected Outcome 4

An understanding of the evolution of the human capacity for creating and acquiring culture and the (lack of) relationship between human biological variation and cultural variation.

Timeline for the Outcome 4

Starting Date for the Implementation: In Progress

Anticipated Date for the First Results: In Progress