Annual/Biennial Program Assessment Report

Academic Year Assessed: 2022-2023

College: CLS

Department: Sociology & **Anthropology**

Submitted by: Michael Neeley, Cody Warner (DH)

Program(s) Assessed

List all majors (including each option), minors, and certificates that are included in this assessment:

Anthropology

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☐   **Have you reviewed the most recent Annual Program Assessment Report submitted and Assessment and Outcomes Committee feedback? (*please contact Assistant Provost Deborah Blanchard if you need a copy of either one).***

     YES

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The Assessment Report should contain the following elements, which are outlined in this template and includes additional instructions and information. Additional instructions and information should be deleted from final reports.

1. Past Assessment Summary.
2. Action Research Question.
3. Assessment Plan, Schedule, and Data Source(s).
4. What Was Done.
5. What Was Learned.
6. How We Responded.
7. Closing the Loop.

Sample reports and guidance can be found at:
https://www.montana.edu/provost/assessment/program_assessment.html

1. **Past Assessment Summary.** Briefly summarize the findings from the last assessment report conducted related to the PLOs being assessed this year. Include any findings that influenced this cycle's assessment approach. Alternatively, reflect on the program assessment conducted last year, and explain how that impacted or informed any changes made to this cycle's assessment plan.

   Feedback from the prior assessment was largely positive, with some recommendations on how the process might be improved moving forward. One thing that we paid particular attention to, as discussed below, is the balance of majors versus non-majors in our courses. This is an issue because students without a foundation in lower-division Anthropology courses do not get the same exposure to our PLOs that our student majors do. There does appear to be some evidence that our majors (as expected) are assessing higher than non-majors. The committee feels that utilizing more university resources (such as the Writing Center) might help address some of this gap.

2. **Action Research Question.** What question are you seeking to answer in this cycle's assessment?

   We have two research questions for this cycle. First, can students meet the designated thresholds for the PLOs under consideration? And second, do we see a difference in assessment for courses that are dominated by student majors compared to courses with a mix of majors and non-majors?

3. **Assessment Plan, Schedule, and Data Source(s).**
   a) Please provide a multi-year assessment schedule that will show when all program learning outcomes will be assessed, and by what criteria (data).

ASSESSMENT PLANNING CHART					
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOME	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	*Data Source**
Students will recognize and differentiate the diversity of human cultures and languages and the principles and methods that anthropologists employ for studying them.	X			X	Essay Exam
Students will identify the biological principles and historical contingencies that explain and govern the deep history of humanity as revealed by the findings of human paleontology and archaeology.	X			X	Essay Exam
Students will describe the fundamental laws and processes of heredity and evolution, and their implications for individuals and populations.		X			Essay Exam
Students will demonstrate knowledge of contemporary anthropological or archaeological theory.		X	ANTY 450		Final Paper
Students will demonstrate facility with critical thinking and cross-cultural competencies necessary for participation in today's globalized world.			ANTY 337		Final Paper

b) What are the threshold values for which your program demonstrates student achievement?

Threshold Values		
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOME	Threshold Value	Data Source
LO#4: Students will demonstrate knowledge of contemporary anthropological or archaeological theory.	The threshold value for this outcome is for 80% of assessed students to score 3 or above on a 1-4 scoring rubric.	Randomly selected student papers
LO#5: Students will demonstrate facility with critical thinking and cross-cultural competencies necessary for participation in today's globalized world.	The threshold value for this outcome is for 80% of assessed students to score 3 or above on a 1-4 scoring rubric.	Randomly selected student papers

4. What Was Done.

a) Was the completed assessment consistent with the program's assessment plan? If not, please explain the adjustments that were made.

☐ **Yes**   ☐ No

b) How were data collected and analyzed and by whom? Please include method of collection and sample size.

For ANTY 450 Archaeological Theory, all of the submitted final papers (26 in the class) were considered as artifacts. Of the 26, 23% (6 of 26) were randomly selected for evaluation using the above rubric. Each paper was given a number and a random number generator was used to select the 6 in this sample.

For ANTY 337 Sex & Sexuality in Japan, the instructor submitted a sample of 7 papers as artifacts. These represent a 24% sample (7 of 29) for the class.

Each of the artifacts for each PLO was read and scored for each category using the rubrics presented above. Every artifact was given a final overall score. These are presented in table form below.

The analysis of the data was carried out independently by each member of the assessment committee (Craig Lee, Michael Neeley).

c) Please provide a rubric that demonstrates how your data were evaluated.

PLO #4: Students will demonstrate knowledge of contemporary anthropological or archaeological theory.

PLO #5: Students will demonstrate facility with critical thinking and cross-cultural competencies necessary for participation in today's globalized world.

	Level 1: Not yet competent	Level 2: Fairly Competent	Level 3: Highly Competent	Level 4: Sophisticated	Threshold Values: 80% of students will meet or exceed Level 3 competency
Depth of Analysis	Paper does not address the assignment. Paper is inconsistent with anthropological principles (e.g., it makes or fails to challenge ethnocentric assumptions)	Paper does not address some aspects of the assignment. Paper demonstrates a somewhat shaky grasp of anthropological principles.	Paper fully meets the parameters of the assignment but does not exceed them. Paper demonstrates a good grasp of anthropological principles but has some awkwardness in applying them.	Paper goes beyond the assignment to explore the implications of arguments or evidence in new contexts or in particularly thoughtful, insightful, and/or original ways. Paper shows a nuanced grasp of anthropological principles and the ability to apply these principles with facility.	
Grasp of Readings	Paper badly misrepresents the authors' arguments, evidence, and/or conclusions.	Paper represents the authors' arguments, evidence and conclusions accurately though not sufficiently clearly. There are minor inaccuracies.	Paper represents the author's arguments, evidence and conclusions accurately.	Paper represents the authors' arguments, evidence and conclusions accurately, fairly and eloquently. Demonstrates a firm understanding of the implications of the author's arguments.	
Thesis Paragraph	Thesis paragraph does not have a discernable central argument. The argument is not demonstrable.	Thesis paragraph identifies a central argument that is demonstrable, though not stated sufficiently clearly. Does not guide the reader into the body of the paper.	Thesis paragraph clearly identifies a demonstrable central argument. Gives the reader a reasonably good sense of the nature of evidence that will follow.	Clearly and eloquently identifies a demonstrable and nuanced central argument. Provides the reader with a clear sense of the nature of evidence that will follow. Reveals the organizational structure of the paper. Guides the reader smoothly and logically into the body of the paper.	
Evidence	Evidence used does not clearly support the main argument. (Where applicable) Important opposing evidence is ignored, thereby weakening the central argument.	Connection between argument and evidence is not clearly articulated in all cases. (Where applicable) Consideration of opposing evidence is cursory or the evidence is not convincingly refuted.	Evidence used to support the central point is well chosen, though not particularly rich or detailed. The connection between argument and evidence is clearly articulated. (Where applicable) Some opposing evidence is considered and refuted.	Evidence used to support the central point is rich, detailed and well chosen. Evidence sections employ appropriate illustrations and/or quotations. The connection between argument and evidence is clearly and compellingly articulated in all cases. (Where applicable) Important opposing evidence (i.e. evidence that might seem to contradict your argument) is considered and convincingly refuted.	
Conclusion	Is missing or cursory. Repeats the topic paragraph more-or-less verbatim.	Restates the same points as the topic paragraph without reframing them. Introduces new material rather than new perspectives.	Synthesizes and brings closure but does not examine new perspectives or questions.	Elegantly synthesizes and reframes key points from the paper. Suggests new perspectives or questions relevant to the central argument, and brings closure.	
Organization	Organization of the paper as a whole is not logical or discernable.	Organization of the paper as a whole can only be discerned with effort. Not all parts of the paper fit the organizational structure. Not all the parts of the paper are effectively integrated. In a number of paragraphs, there is not a distinct or coherent point. Topic sentences are missing or unclear in a number of paragraphs. In a number of paragraphs,	Organization of paper as a whole is logical and apparent, but transitions between paragraphs are not consistently smooth. Every paragraph makes one distinct and coherent point and, for the most part, the parts of each paragraph connect logically and effectively. In all but a few cases, the paragraph's point is expressed in a clear topic sentence.	Organization of paper as a whole is logical and quickly apparent. Connections among paragraphs are clearly articulated. Transitions between paragraphs are smooth. Every paragraph makes one distinct and coherent point, expressed in a clear topic sentence; the parts of each paragraph connect logically and persuasively, and internal transitions are smooth.	

		the parts do not connect logically.			
Clarity	Throughout the paper, wording is imprecise or ambiguous. Sentence structure is consistently confusing.	Wording is imprecise or ambiguous fairly often. Sentence structure is often confusing. Quotations are not framed effectively in the text.	Paper is for the most part precisely worded and unambiguous. Sentence structure is mostly clear. Quotations are framed effectively in the text.	Throughout the paper, wording is precise and unambiguous. Sentence structure is consistently clear and lucid. Quotations are all framed effectively in the text (i.e. integrated properly in terms of both grammar and meaning) and explicated where necessary.	
Mechanics	Paper is unacceptably sloppy. Quotes are frequently not attributed or improperly cited.	There are a number of spelling and grammatical errors. In a few places, quotes are not attributed and cited.	There are a few minor spelling or grammatical errors. Quotes are all properly attributed and cited.	Paper is clean and appropriately formatted. There are no incomplete or run-on sentences. Quotes are all properly attributed and cited. There are virtually no spelling or grammatical errors.	

5. What Was Learned.

a) Based on the analysis of the data, and compared to the threshold values established, what was learned from the assessment?

Data Table for ANTY 450 PLO #4: Students will demonstrate knowledge of contemporary anthropological or archaeological theory.

	Paper #1	Paper #2	Paper #3	Paper #4	Paper #5	Paper #6	Overall
Topic	Gender in Archaeology	Japanese Archaeology	Scotty MacNeish	Human Landscapes	Evolutionary Archaeology	Nationalist Archaeology	
Depth of Analysis	L3	L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3/L4	L3 (3.0)
Grasp of Readings	L3	L3	L2/L3	L3/L4	L3	L3/L4	L3 (3.08)
Thesis Paragraph	L3	L2/L3	L2	L3/L4	L3/L4	L3	L3 (2.91)
Evidence	L3	L3	L2/L3	L3/L4	L3	L3	L3 (3.0)
Conclusion	L3/L4	L3	L2	L3	L3	L3	L3 (2.91)
Organization	L3	L3	L2/L3	L3/L4	L3/L4	L3/L4	L3 (3.16)
Clarity	L3	L3	L2/L3	L3/L4	L3	L3	L3 (3.0)
Mechanics	L2/L3	L3	L2/L3	L3/L4	L3	L3/L4	L3 (3.0)
Overall	L3 (3.0)	L3 (2.93)	L2/L3(2.37)	L3/L4 (3.37)	L3 (3.12)	L3 (3.25)	L3 (3.0)

	Paper #1	Paper #2	Paper #3	Paper #4	Paper #5	Paper #6	Overall
Topic	Gender in Archaeology	Japanese Archaeology	Scotty MacNeish	Human Landscapes	Evolutionary Archaeology	Nationalist Archaeology	
Depth of Analysis	L3	L3	L2/L3	L3	L3/L4	L3	L3 (3.0)
Grasp of Readings	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3/L4	L3	L3 (3.08)
Thesis Paragraph	L3	L3/L4	L3	L4	L4	L3/L4	L3/L4 (3.5)
Evidence	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3 (3.0)
Conclusion	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3/L4	L4	L3/L4	L3 (3.25)
Organization	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3/L4	L3 (3.08)
Clarity	L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3 (2.92)
Mechanics	L2/L3	L2/L3	L3/L4	L3/L4	L4	L3	L3(3.17)
Overall	L3 (2.89)	L3 (2.94)	L3 (3.0)	L3 (3.25)	L3/L4 (3.5)	L3 (3.19)	L3 (3.13)

A summary of the scores show five of the artifact answers at Level 3 or above with one at Level2/3. This puts five (**83%**) of the answers at Highly Competent or above and one at Fairly Competent/Highly Competent.

Data Table for ANTY 337 PLO #5: Students will demonstrate facility with critical thinking and cross-cultural competencies necessary for participation in today's globalized world.

	Paper #1	Paper #2	Paper #3	Paper #4	Paper #5	Paper #6	Paper #7	Overall
Topic	Wakashu Gender	Queer in Anime	Women in Media	Women's Politics	Dirty Dancing	Changing Gender Norms	Queer Boys in Manga & Anime	
Depth of Analysis	L3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3	L3/L4	L3 (2.92)
Grasp of Readings	L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3 (2.92)
Thesis Paragraph	L2	L2	L2/L3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L3	L2/L3 (2.42)
Evidence	L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3/L4	L3 (3.0)
Conclusion	L2/L3	L2	L2/L3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L2/L3 (2.57)
Organization	L3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3	L3/L4	L3 (2.92)
Clarity	L3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3 (2.85)
Mechanics	L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3 (2.92)
Overall	L3 (2.81)	L2/L3(2.37)	L2/L3(2.68)	L3 (2.87)	L3 (2.87)	L3 (2.93)	L3 (3.18)	L3 (2.81)

	Paper #1	Paper #2	Paper #3	Paper #4	Paper #5	Paper #6	Paper #7	Overall
Topic	Wakashu Gender	Queer in Anime	Women in Media	Women's Politics	Dirty Dancing	Changing Gender Norms	Queer Boys in Manga & Anime	
Depth of Analysis	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3	L2/L3	L3	L3/L4	L3 (2.93)
Grasp of Readings	L3	L3	L3/L4	L3/L4	L3	L3	L4	L3 (3.29)
Thesis Paragraph	L4	L3/L4	L3	L3	L3	L2/L3	L3/L4	L3 (3.21)
Evidence	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3	L3/L4	L3 (3.07)
Conclusion	L2	L2/L3	L3	L2/3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L3/L4	L2/L3 (2.64)
Organization	L3/L4	L3	L3/L4	L3	L2/L3	L3	L3	L3 (3.07)
Clarity	L3	L3	L3	L3	L2/L3	L2/3	L3	L3 (2.86)
Mechanics	L3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L2/L3	L2	L2	L2/L3	L2 (2.43)
Overall	L3 (3.0)	L3 (2.94)	L3 (3.06)	L3 (2.94)	L2/L3 (2.63)	L2/L3 (2.69)	L3 (3.31)	L3 (2.93)

A summary of the overall scores for this answer have three at Level 3 or above. The remaining four are split between L2/L3 and L3. While three of the seven (**43%**) are evaluated as Highly Competent, the other four (**57%**) are in the Highly to Fairly Competent range.

In one case (ANTY 450) the threshold of 80% was met, whereas in the other case (ANTY 337) only 43% of the artifacts met the threshold (though in the latter case none were below the Fairly Competent/Highly Competent level). One of the factors that might impact these scores is the presence of majors (ANTY 450—80%) versus a mix of majors and non-majors (ANTY 337—61%). More generally, we would expect the majors to be more committed to the curriculum and are likely to score higher as a result. This is reflected in the lower overall scores (2.81 & 2.93) for the class with fewer majors (ANTY 337) than the scores (3.0 & 3.13) in the major dominated course (ANTY

450). One of the things we tried to do this time around was to keep the sample proportion consistent across the two artifacts. We were successful in this with sample proportions of 23% and 24% for the two courses. Last assessment cycle, we considered the possibility of changing the threshold from 80% to 70% to see if this might alter our success rates. Looking at our scores from this cycle, it doesn't appear that moving the threshold would have any impact on our scores. Based on the assessment artifacts used this cycle, it appears that we are doing a reasonably successful job with students meeting or coming very close to the expected standards for each of these program learning outcomes.

b) What areas of strength in the program were identified from this assessment process?

Areas of strength in the artifacts (term papers) include grasp of readings, organization, thesis paragraph, conclusion, and mechanics. It is worth noting that these are more consistently reflected in the major dominated course (ANTY 450). With regard to the PLOs being assessed, these are positive signs that students are progressing toward the program goals. One of the recommendations from evaluators in 2022 revolved around our use of writing quality in our rubric, though this is not explicitly stated as part of our PLO. While we agree that adept writing is desired, we are a little reluctant to make that part of our PLO given that we do not teach that skill directly.

c) What areas were identified that either need improvement or could be improved in a different way from this assessment process?

Areas of weakness are more pronounced among the artifacts from the class with more non-majors where we identified greater issues with the thesis paragraph, the conclusions, and mechanics of writing. These were similar to the weaknesses identified from the previous year and reflect a longer-term issue with writing and writing instruction prior to their enrollment in the course. Since the nuts and bolts of good writing is not part of our PLOs, it seems that encouraging students to seek help from on-campus writing resources (e.g., the writing lab) is one possible solution to this endemic problem.

6. How We Responded.

a) Describe how "What Was Learned" was communicated to the department, or program faculty. How did faculty discussions re-imagine new ways program assessment might contribute to program growth/improvement/innovation beyond the bare minimum of achieving program learning objectives through assessment activities conducted at the course level?

The results were sent to each of the faculty and then the three of us got together to discuss the results. There was a general sense that this was useful, but no plan of action was deemed to be necessary at the present.

b) How are the results of this assessment informing changes to enhance student learning in the program?

We plan to target PLO#1 (*Students will recognize and differentiate the diversity of human cultures and languages and the principles and methods that anthropologists employ for studying them*) by using data from our introductory course (ANTY 101). We propose selecting a targeted subset of five multiple choice questions from one of the exams that are relevant to the PLO and collecting them from all of the students in the class. This will give us a more robust sample and enable us to examine different facets of the PLO.

c) If information outside of this assessment is informing programmatic change, please describe that.
n/a

d) What support and resources (e.g., workshops, training, etc.) might you need to make these adjustments?

None that we can think of at the current time.

7. Closing the Loop(s). Reflect on the program learning outcomes, how they were assessed in the previous cycle (refer to #1 of the report), and what was learned in this cycle. What action will be taken to improve student learning objectives going forward?

a) In reviewing the last report that assessed the PLO(s) in this assessment cycle, what changes proposed were implemented and will be measured in future assessment reports?
This is our third year collecting data under the new assessment plan. In the past, we created a curriculum map for anthropology to help us see where the courses fit into the program learning outcomes and we made modifications to PLO #1. With ongoing and anticipated changes in our faculty composition, we will be adding new courses and will continue to update our curriculum map. We are also examining course content for consistency across instructors not only to ensure that PLOs can be adequately assessed, but to make sure that prerequisite information in lower division courses is sufficiently introduced for student success in upper division courses.

b) Have you seen a change in student learning based on other program adjustments made in the past? Please describe the adjustments made and subsequent changes in student learning.
This is hard to say at this point. We have just completed our third year of collecting data and just finished our first run through of all of the PLOs. Prior adjustments to the program include establishing a curriculum map and slightly modifying one of the PLOs (#1). Based on a very limited data set, we can make the case that there has been a trend (past two cycles) for classes that are major heavy to be generally more successful at meeting the 80% threshold than classes with fewer majors (this applies to both lower division and upper

division courses). Whether this trend in student learning continues would require additional cycles of data collection.