

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY ASSESSMENT PLAN (REVISED SPRING 2012)

MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT. The programs of Sociology and Anthropology are oriented around the following objectives:

- To provide a well-rounded liberal arts education heavily invested in Sociology & Anthropology.
- To provide students an opportunity to study social worlds, societies and individuals in-depth, including social arrangements, interactions, structures, institutions, and cultures.
- To foster critical reading and thinking, intellectual curiosity, and ethical reasoning.
- To enable students to pursue their own intellectual questions through independent research and learning.
- To help progress our students' communication skills.
- To prepare students for the workforce – in government, business, education, nonprofits – by developing skills in research, synthesis, analysis, and written and oral communication.
- To prepare interested students for graduate-level studies in academic and applied fields.

SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM

PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT. The Sociology Program engages in assessment as an effective means for enhancing student learning and the fulfillment of our mission. The main priority of our assessment plan is to enable the program and its faculty to systematically study student learning in a way that such learning can be enhanced. Our academic program assessment further enables us to enhance student learning by making a clear conceptual distinction between teaching and learning. We achieve this by focusing on the (a) teaching process through the alignment of learning goals and embedded assessment and the (b) resultant learning outcomes through the analyses of the embedded assessment data and trends. We also strive for a properly executed assessment of our academic programs so that it contributes to our improved teaching and learning in a variety of ways. Specifically, from our assessment, our faculty

1. engage in serious and substantive discussions about important learning outcomes and the education of our students.
2. design and administer good assessment instruments and methods that offer a meaningful way to rigorously evaluate our learning outcomes.
3. reflect on and discuss the assessment results in a forum that facilitates a genuine consideration of possible changes that will enable learning objectives to be more fully realized.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

- *Learning Outcome 1: Sociology as a Discipline.* Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the discipline of sociology and its role in contributing to our understanding of society and changes in society.
- *Learning Outcome 2: Sociological Concepts.* Our students will demonstrate a knowledge, comprehension, and relevance of core sociological concepts.
- *Learning Outcome 3: Sociological Theories.* Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the role of theory in sociology.
- *Learning Outcome 4: Sociological Application.* Our students will formulate research questions based on critical readings and understandings of sociological research.
- *Learning Outcome 5: Oral Communication.* Our students will demonstrate the ability to present materially orally in an organized and effective manner.
- *Learning Outcome 6: Written Communication.* Our students will demonstrate appropriate writing practices and formats and effective written communication and editing skills.

- *Learning Outcome 7: Empiricism.* Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the roles and uses of evidence in qualitative and quantitative methods.

INDICATORS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Contingent on the rubric used. For both rubric and graded evaluations, Work must be judged minimally acceptable to meet the expectations for the learning outcome under evaluation.

ASSESSMENT PLANNING CHART. PROGRAM: Sociology					
LEARNING OUTCOME	<i>Assessment Year and Targeted Courses</i>				<i>Assessment Targets</i>
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	
<i>Learning Outcome 1: Sociology as a Discipline.</i> Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the discipline of sociology and its role in contributing to our understanding of society and changes in society		SOCI414			Essay Question
<i>Learning Outcome 2: Sociological Concepts.</i> Our students will demonstrate a knowledge, comprehension, and relevance of core sociological concepts.			SOCI499		Final Project & Poster
<i>Learning Outcome 3: Sociological Theories.</i> Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the role of theory in sociology.		SOCI455			Essay Questions
<i>Learning Outcome 4: Sociological Application.</i> Our students will formulate research questions based on critical readings and understandings of sociological research.			SOCI318		Final Project
<i>Learning Outcome 5: Oral Communication.</i> Our students will demonstrate the ability to present material orally in an organized and effective manner.	SOCI470				Discussion Leader
<i>Learning Outcome 6: Written Communication:</i> Our students will demonstrate appropriate writing practices and formats and effective written communication and editing skills.	SOCI499			SOCI499	Final Project
<i>Learning Outcome 7: Empiricism.</i> Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the roles and uses of evidence in qualitative and quantitative methods.				SOCI318	Essay Question

ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM

PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT. The Anthropology Program uses assessment to obtain a meaningful overview of our success in the fulfillment of our mission and as an opportunity to enhance the methods used to promote student learning. Our yearly assessments involve meeting with each graduating student and analyzing that student's work as an entire faculty based on a lower level paper and a senior level paper. Our academic program assessment allows us to look at individual courses and ascertain how student-learning outcomes in each course contribute to our overall learning goals for students enrolled in that course. We strive to improve teaching and learning through

1. A substantive discussion about how our curriculum and course design will work to maximize learning outcomes and the overall education of our students.
2. A thorough analysis of each student's work as that student has progressed through our curriculum.
3. Reflection on and analysis of assessment results in a manner that will lead to positive changes in learning outcomes for anthropology students.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to understand and articulate key anthropological concepts and theories
- Students will learn to read, understand, and critique anthropological books, articles, visual media, and reports
- Students will acquire research skills that include the acquisition of research materials, the analysis of those materials, and the ability to synthesize findings in a report format, as appropriate to the course
- Students will develop the ability to write in an organized and logically consistent manner
- Students shall learn to analyze multi-cultural and global issues.
- Students shall engage in field or laboratory research and learn to carry out preliminary analyses of materials from primary materials and/or collections
- Students shall learn to analyze and interpret contemporary, historic, and prehistoric data from a variety of societies or eras of past human experience.
- Students shall learn to formulate and present materials in a clear and understandable oral format

INDICATORS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Unacceptable	1	(for graded assignments = D, D-, or F)
Minimally acceptable	2	(for graded assignments = D+/C-)
Acceptable	3	(for graded assignments = C/C+)
Exceeds expectation	4	(for graded assignments = B's or A-)
Exceptional	5	(for graded assignments = A/A+)

Work must be judged minimally acceptable to meet the expectations for that course.

In each year, those whose courses are being monitored for learning outcomes will read a sampling of the other person's students' work or attend a sampling of oral presentations for that course (i.e., in 2011-12 the instructor for ANTY 425 will read a sampling of work from students in ANTY 343, and vice versa). The professor of the course and his/her colleague shall read the selected papers (or judge presentations) based on the designated learning outcome under review. This shall help provide a way of norming the assessment outcomes for any particular course. Each sampled paper or presentation shall be scored in accord with the

designated learning outcome. Therefore, grades for this outcome may vary from a student's overall grade on the assignment.

ASSESSMENT PLANNING CHART. PROGRAM: Anthropology					
LEARNING OUTCOME	<i>Assessment Year and Targeted Courses</i>				<i>Assessment Targets</i>
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	
Understand & articulate anthropological concepts & theories		ANTY450			Essay & Project
Learn to read, understand, & critique anthropological works			ANTY473		Course Exams
Acquire research skills that include the acquisition, analysis, and synthesis of research materials in a report format	ANTY425				Research Project
Develop the ability to write in a organized and logically consistent manner				ANTY313	Term Paper
Learn to analyze multi-cultural and global issues	ANTY343				Anime Project
Engage in field or laboratory research and carry out preliminary analyses of materials from primary materials and/or collections		ANTY453			Lab Project
Learn to analyze, compare & interpret contemporary, historic, and prehistoric data from several societies or eras of past human experience				ANTY428	First & Final Exams
Learn to formulate and present materials in an oral format			ANTY494		Final Presentation

SOCI499: Senior Capstone
Professor: Leah Schmalzbauer

Assessment by: Dr. Tami Eitle and Danielle Hidalgo
Learning Outcome: Written Communication

Six (6) papers were randomly selected for assessment of student learning outcomes: two A papers, two B papers, and 2 C or D papers from each capstone section (12 papers total).

Overall our assessments of the papers were very similar. We had a discussion based on our assessments and agreed upon the following:

Students who perform well (at the A level) in the capstone are doing really superior work. They show an understanding of the kinds of questions that sociology can address, are able to critically read and assess prior research, are knowledgeable enough to choose appropriate research methods given their research topics and questions, and provide informed sociological interpretation of their results. In addition they write very well. In fact some of these papers we felt were of such high quality that they could be prepared for presentation at professional meetings along side the work of graduate students.

Students who produced B level papers were more of a mixed group. Two of the papers were similar in many respects to the A papers, but were not as well written and showed less of a mastery of the literature. The rest of the papers were just sloppy in many respects: For example, more summary than critical discussion of prior research, not enough consideration given to the appropriateness of the method, less independent interpretation in their discussion of findings. These papers also depended more on direct quotes rather than describing prior research in their own words.

The C (or in one case D) papers were altogether a lot more confused than the other papers. The literature reviews were often disorganized and not focused, the research questions in at least half the cases were not really sociological, the research methods were not necessarily appropriate for the research questions, and the papers trialed off into narrative way too often for a formal research paper. These students often still do not understand what data are (confusing data with research articles that they find in the library system), their proposed studies or analysis was not at the same level of analysis as their research question suggested, and they had a tendency to want to ask their research questions to their subjects. Example: Research Questions: Why do police officers have higher divorce rates compared with many other professionals? Proposed Methods: Interviewing police officers and asking them why police officers have higher divorce rates. Finally there is a marked and significant drop in the quality of the writing in the C papers compared to any of the other papers.

SOCI470: Environmental Sociology
Professor: Scott Myers

Assessment by: Dr. Scott Myers
Learning Outcome: Oral Communication

This learning outcome was assessed by the attached rubric, and all students enrolled in the class (n = 31) were scored according to the rubric. The readings for the course were comprised solely of peer-reviewed journal articles and published books by well-regarded publishing houses. The course was divided into five different topical sections, and each student was required to be a discussion leader for one of the sections. On average, each section had six students as discussion leaders, and each section lasted about three weeks. The students were provided with extensive guidelines on how to lead discussions, and these guidelines were nearly identical in scope to the criterion in the attached rubric.

Of the 31 students, 30 of them received a rubric score at the minimally acceptable level. This indicates that these students met the expectations for this learning outcome. The one student who did not score as minimally acceptable did so because of a lack of preparation and attendance. Of the 30 who met the minimal threshold, the distribution of scores were: 5 scored as Exceptional, 12 scored as Exceeds Expectations, 8 scored as Acceptable, and 5 scored as Minimally Acceptable.

Across the six criterion categories in the rubric, students excelled most in the Responding to Students and Atmosphere categories. On the other hand, the discussion leaders tended to struggle most with Question Types and Closure. In fact, only a few students were able to successfully close out a class discussion properly due, in part, because of the types of questions they used to frame the discussions. Interestingly, there appeared to be a peer-learning effect occurring throughout the semester. That is, the quality of the discussions and discussion leaders improved with each subsequent section, perhaps indicating that the non-discussion leaders learned about oral communication by observing the discussion leaders. These students then applied these lessons during their tenure as discussion leader.

Most of the students came well prepared and excited to lead the discussions, and most of the students who were not discussion leaders were equally excited for the challenge. The main hurdle for both groups of students was perhaps the level of reading required. It appeared that the students struggled with some of the academic readings, especially when these readings were highly theoretical or contained inferential statistics.

While not part of this learning outcome, the incorporation of this activity into the course appeared to have an unanticipated outcome. Namely, the quality of the in-class written exams was of very high quality.

Discussion Leader / Oral Communication Scoring Rubric
 SOCI470 – Environmental Sociology; Spring 2011

Discussion Leader: _____ Evaluator: _____

Criterion	Exceptional to Good (4 – 5 points)	Fair to Acceptable (2 – 3 points)	Poor to Unacceptable (0 – 1 points)	SCORE
Initiation of Discussion	Leader begins with a short, concise statement of the problem being discussed; avoids an introductory lecture.	Leader begins with rambling problem statement; has a tendency to lecture at the outset.	Leader begins discussion with a long lecture, and to some extents tends to achieve the goal by self.	
Responding to Students	Leader responds well to students who provide input; acknowledges contributions regularly and thanks with sincerity; asks appropriate follow-up questions.	Leader non-uniformly acknowledges contributions provided by students, or uses only such statements as okay, yes, etc. Rarely asks follow-up questions.	Leader fails to acknowledge contributions made by students. Does not ask follow-up questions to obtain required clarification if necessary.	
Question Types	Leader uses a wide variety of question types; uses questions that directly bear on the expressed goal; avoids rhetorical questions; manages to have students think and talk critically about topic.	Leader uses a limited variety of question types; limited applicability of questions to goal attainment; some use of rhetorical questions.	Leader uses a very limited variety of question types; some showing a degree of inapplicability to goal attainment; does not achieve any reasonable depth of discussion.	
Question Shifting	Leader generally begins discussion with divergent questions and moves toward convergent questions near the end of the discussion; makes appropriate digressions if necessary.	Leader's choice of questions somewhat erratic, but tend to move from divergent to convergent as discussion continues.	Leader does not exhibit any concern for type of questions asked either at beginning or conclusion. Questions bear directly on subject matter in a lock-step fashion.	
Atmosphere	Leader maintains a friendly, collaborative atmosphere; all students appear free to participate without recrimination.	Leader tends to maintain a reasonable atmosphere for discussion, but sometimes fails to control criticisms or witticisms of others.	Leader fails to maintain atmosphere conducive to successful discussion; statements or witticisms of others offend some students.	
Closure	Leader helps students to arrive at a meaningful conclusion to the discussion, restating the original goal, and having students explain its solution or achievement; uses appropriate questioning to ensure attainment of goal.	Leader tends to do his or her own summary; concludes discussion early and quickly due to a lack of time; does a minimal job to determine whether or not educational goal has been attained.	Leader does not achieve any form of closure, or does so very inadequately; runs out of time; does not assess to determine whether or not students have achieved educational goal.	
<i>Adapted from: Physics Teacher Education Program Illinois State University</i>			TOTAL:	/30

INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT	RANGE*
EXCEPTIONAL	27 – 30
EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	23 – 26
ACCEPTABLE	12 – 22
MINIMALLY ACCEPTABLE	6 – 11
UNACCEPTABLE	5 OR LESS

*Work must be judged as “Minimally Acceptable” to meet the expectations for this learning outcome.

Learning Outcomes Summary for Spring 2012 SOCIOLOGY FACULTY RESPONSE

The two courses assessed for the 2011-2012 cycle was SOCI499: Senior Capstone and SOCI470: Environmental Sociology. SOCI499 assessed the learning outcome of written communication and SOCI470 assessed the learning outcome of oral communication. The quality of the work of the students in both classes were mixed, but, on average, met the expectations for each learning outcome.

For SOCI499, the evaluation of the C and D paper group revealed that these students struggled for two different reasons: (1) many of them are just disinterested, unmotivated, and want to do only enough to get by, but (2) among this group are also students who really are just getting by and they are working at it but are just generally borderline C students. The recommendation of the Sociology faculty is that it may worthwhile to express to faculty and particularly faculty teaching research methods about the confusion in students minds about data and research articles being the same thing. Further, it would benefit our students to have to think about unit of analysis as they read through the research that we all assign in our classes. For writing skills, we believe it would greatly benefit our students and their learning if they took at least one English comp class in addition to the W Core requirement. Even among the A paper group, these stronger students might improve their writing with more practice.

For SOCI470, the Sociology faculty saw similar themes as that in SOCI499. Namely, most students struggle with original journal articles, especially those that are empirically and statistically driven. Yet, the faculty still regarded the Discussion Leader component as an integral aspect of student learning—one that goes far in achieving active and student-centered learning principles. Much like the above recommendation for an additional writing course, the faculty believe that our majors would benefit from a public speaking course, perhaps advising them to take COM110US to fulfill the CORE 2.0 requirement.

Curricular changes: None recommended at this point, but the faculty will continue to discuss the possibility of requiring our majors to take COM110US

ANTY343: Popular Culture in/out of Japan
Professor: Tomomi Yamaguchi

Assessment by: Dr. Yamaguchi

Learning Outcome: Students shall learn to analyze multi-cultural and global issues.

This course examines the significant socio-historical and political meanings that mass/popular culture has in our everyday lives in personal, local and global contexts. In this case, the focus is on pop culture materials originating from or related to Japan. With this theme, *all* of the materials in this course are oriented toward the learning outcome under review which deals with providing students with the tools to allow them to analyze **multi-cultural and global issues**. Students learned the approaches and skills to critically interpret and analyze a variety of pop culture media and people's use of them in multi-cultural and global contexts, and learned how to connect academic approaches to popular culture to students' everyday life experiences. Students also discussed how various cultural practices have the potential to cause social change, both in Japan and globally.

In lectures and class discussions, the class both dealt with the appropriation of American popular culture in Japan, and also with performing arts, TV shows, films and games that originated in Japan and subsequently became extremely popular and were appropriated by people in the U.S. There is a long history of such materials – such as *Power Rangers* and *Pokemon*, Japanese games, and the Internet (especially the cult-popularity, especially among the college generation, of the anonymous online message board, 4chan, which has been heavily influenced by the Japanese online message boards). Close examination and discussion of these concrete phenomenon during class provided students the opportunities to analyze popular culture in the context of globalization, as well as its impact in people's everyday lives.

Moreover, the class discussed the roles of popular culture as a means of resistance among minorities in multi-cultural settings. An example is the discussion of the subculture of Japanese drumming, or taiko, in North America. The field trip to the Montana Taiko group's practice session and a documentary film on Taiko in North America provided students opportunities to investigate taiko's role as a means of ethnic pride and resistance among Japanese Americans in the U.S. Most of this has occurred since the Civil Rights era of the 1960s. Another example is the discussion of women's professional wrestling and women's soccer in Japan, in which students considered the role of performance and sports a means of resistance by women against the dominant construction of gender, and the possibility of alternative genders.

This year, in particular, due to the massive earthquake in the Tohoku region and resulting accident at Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, a number of sources were used that reflected the past and ongoing politics of nuclear weapons and power in Japan. In some cases, a comparative American interpretation of the situation was considered as well. The class explored how the themes of nuclear weapons and energy have been discussed in Japanese media and popular culture, especially since the 1950s. Again, the United States helped to provide a comparative perspective. One source of primary materials that the

class discussed related to this theme were the films *Gojira* (1954) alongside *Godzilla* (1956), a Hollywood re-made version broadly based on the original Japanese film). Tezuka Osamu's *Astroboy* from the 1950s was then considered. This is a manga/anime that reflects the idealization of nuclear energy in Japan (released at a time when nuclear weaponry was heavily criticized). *Astroboy* also later became popular in the U.S. as well. The class then investigated the 2007 anime *Summer Wars* whose key motif includes the catastrophic accident at a nuclear power plant and the failure of science and technology, another extremely popular film among the anime fans in the U.S. Finally, a recent magna (2007~current), *Coppelion*, whose setting is nearly identical to the recent tragedy at Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant was analyzed and discussed in the class. Through in-depth analyses of those works, students gained the ability to critically examine popular cultural phenomenon in relation to significant social and political issues in Japan and beyond.

The course included lectures, in-class and online discussion on the assigned readings and films, oral presentations and discussion led by students. These approaches gave students ample opportunities to actively participate in the analysis of popular culture in and out of Japan, and its role in global and multicultural world. Along with scholarly articles and books, students were exposed to primary materials from Japan – such as manga, anime and films (subbed or dubbed) -- and conducted critical analyses on them.

There were four major assignments for the course (in addition to readings and watching films, class participation and online participation). I will list them below, with brief explanation of how it is relevant to students' obtaining skills analyzing global and multi-cultural concerns.

To quantify the research outcomes of this course, I have used the scores on Assignment #1 (*Gojira/Godzilla* paper) as the data source and aligned the outcomes with the proposed scoring method.

That scoring method as defined in the document that outlines the anthropology learning outcomes is:

Scale:

Unacceptable	1	(for graded assignments = D, D-, or F)
Minimally acceptable	2	(for graded assignments = D+/C-)
Acceptable	3	(for graded assignments = C/C+)
Exceeds expectation	4	(for graded assignments = B's or A-)
Exceptional	5	(for graded assignments = A/A+)

1. Assignment #1 *Gojira/Godzilla* paper – Students were asked to critically examine and compare two films: one is *Gojira* made in Japan in 1954, and the other is *Godzilla* produced in Hollywood in 1956, and present their analysis in a 3-4 page paper. The 1956 American version is an edited and re-made version of the original 1954 version produced in Japan. Students were asked to pay particular attention to the historical context of the 1950s Cold War era, and especially in relation to the U.S. nuclear testing and the emergence of anti-nuclear sentiments in Japan in the 1950s. Students were also asked to conduct critical analyses of the representation of “Japan” and of the Japanese people, character descriptions, historical and political backgrounds, genders,

and a newly added character that appears in the U.S. version. With twenty-seven students submitting projects, the average percentage score on the project was 84.87%. In accord with the scale noted above, this suggests that, as a whole, the class “**exceeds expectations**” for the global/multicultural analysis learning outcome. On a student-by-student basis, three students completed projects in the “exceptional” category. On the other hand, two students were in the “acceptable” range, five students were in the “minimally acceptable” range, and one student was in the “unacceptable” range. All remaining members of the class were in the “exceeds expectation” range.

2. Assignment #2 Taiko field trip paper with Montana Taiko. – Students were asked to go to a practice session by a local taiko group, participate in the practice, and write an ethnographic analysis of the session, along with a comparative discussion of the history and contemporary practices of taiko in the U.S. The main purpose of this assignment is to critically analyze the history of cultural exchanges and practices as a means of ethnic pride and resistance in a multicultural society. The average score for the class was 84.43%, and other than five students whose works were “minimally acceptable” and one student in “acceptable” range, all other students received “exceeds expectation” or above.
3. Assignment #3 *Doujinshi* (in Japanese) or zine-making project featuring manga or any other materials that students choose to focus on. This group project provided an opportunity for students to engage in hands-on experience of an extremely popular sub-culture in Japan, among literature, manga and anime fans. By engaging in the project, students discussed the reasons for popularity of this particular subculture in Japan – and in the U.S. as well. All groups received “exceeds expectation” or above for this assignment.
4. Assignment #4 Students wrote an 8-13 page paper on an issue relating to Japanese popular culture that emerged out of this class (e.g. popular culture and social change, globalization of popular culture.) Some students chose a poster-option and a film-making option, combined with a short paper. Students were asked to integrate the knowledge they gained through the readings, discussions, analysis of internet resources, media viewings, fieldtrips, as well as required additional research for the paper. Exceptional works includes a detailed analysis of the history of the “super sentai” series (so-called “Rangers” series, such as *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*). It included an in-depth comparison as well as historical contextualization. The other outstanding paper critically analyzed the representation of shrine maids in Japanese manga/anime, and discussed the cultural meaning behind the popularity of this form. One characteristic of this class is that students tend to become extremely enthusiastic about what they research. The works by most skilled students are unique in their approaches and could be easily developed into Capstone project, or even into a Master’s level thesis. There were three students who failed to submit this assignment in time, and four students received “acceptable” scores. All others received “exceeds expectation” or above, with five students who did “exceptional” quality work.

It should be noted this course has students from a wide variety of majors including Anthropology, Japan Studies, film, global and multicultural studies, etc., with varying degree of knowledge and different amounts of experience writing upper-division, college-level papers. Students who were in the “minimally acceptable” and “unacceptable” ranges received better grades in the assignments later in the course. There was also an exchange student from Japan in the class who struggled with writing her assignment in English, especially earlier in the semester. This student received a “minimally acceptable” score.

Assessment of these major assignments in the class demonstrates that the class as a whole exceeds learning outcomes for global/multicultural analysis.

As an additional note, I had a few students at the end of class who were so inspired that they are seriously considering pursuing the subject of Japanese popular culture in graduate school, or are contemplating switching their majors to Anthropology or Japan Studies.

Assessment by: Dr. Larry Carucci

Learning Outcomes: Students shall learn to analyze multi-cultural and global issues.

The syllabus for Anthropology 343 is chock full of opportunities for students to address multi-cultural and global issues, most particularly those relating to contemporary and historical issues in Japan, the society used to frame this course.

In addition to reviewing the syllabus, as an outside reviewer, I have read a sample of two assignments that provided students with occasions when they had to use their knowledge of the cultural and historical differences between Japan and the United States in order to demonstrate to the professor their awareness of the specific grounding of these differences. The first of these exercises asked students to compare the two films *Godzira* and *Godzilla* (a Japanese and American rendition of “the same” material) as a way to address how the Japanese original was posited as an anti-nuclear critique in an era following the horrendous end of the Pacific War along with the disastrous aftermath of the 1954 Bravo Test in the Marshall Islands. With a far different socio-historical positioning, the film was re-made in the United States as *Godzilla*, a much more genre-typical horror thriller with an over-elaborated love story accompaniment that downplayed nuclear/technological themes and the awkward political positioning of the United States in these historical events. The most skilled students demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of these thematic differences as well as the fact that they could NOT be attributed to any simplistic idea that a we::they distinction could account for the distinctly different consciousnesses that underlay the way in which the films came to be fashioned in such thematically unique manners. The less skilled students were still able to point to distinct themes in the two films and to align them with some critical differences in the cultural practices of Japan and the United States, even if they were not as nuanced in their ability to situate these distinctions in specific historical and contextual frames that might best be used to account for the differences. Equally, the most sophisticated students were highly skilled in their use of examples and outside sources to support their arguments, with the mediocre students being less-systematic in their deployment of these analytic tools. In short, this assignment

provided strong evidence that the students had been provided with a sophisticated way of analyzing cross-cultural perspectives on an issue of global concern. As always, the most accomplished students were able to demonstrate that they had thoroughly incorporated the ability to deploy this knowledge with aplomb, while the less accomplished students certainly learned a good deal about how to approach such problems.

Similarly, the second exercise asked students to write an analysis based on their cross-cultural understanding of a Montana Taiko event. In this case, the exercise allows students to engage in a field research exercise and to personally experience something of the “feel” of doing Taiko as well as interviewing some of those in the group who regularly engage in this performative sport/ritual event. These are state of the art skills that students with plans to move on to graduate school must understand (as is the case for many of the anthropology majors who are students in this class). Equally, the written exercise, with its requirement to compare the students’ own research experiences with anthropological accounts of Taiko, and to historically contextualize their analyses are most important. This encourages students to engage some well-grounded contrasts between American society and Japanese society (like the radical individualism of Americans and the socio-centric orientations of Japanese) at the same time it forces them not to reify such stereotypes. As with the Godzira and Godzilla exercise, the most skilled students demonstrated considerable sophistication in their ability to position the differences between Japanese and American social practice in a contextually appropriate manner. The mediocre students tended more toward stereotype. Nonetheless, they were able to identify some central performative themes of Taiko and relate them to important distinctions that generally hold true for Japanese cultural activities. Admirably, in a couple of the best papers, students were also able to begin to explore how their personal experiencing of this event, even at an introductory level, altered how they might position themselves as they fashioned an analytic account of what Taiko was all about. Finally, several students also attempted to explore just how the syncretic features of this event required some special thought about the heterodoxy in all performances of this type. This automatically moves students away from any simplistic stereotyping of cultural difference toward a much more appropriate understanding of the types of “otherness” encountered in today’s globalized world.

In short, an analysis of the syllabus and student research materials submitted for Anthropology 343 demonstrates that this course accomplishes its goal of presenting students with a sophisticated framework through which they may come to understand multi-cultural and global issues. Reading the students’ work, I would say the course “exceeds expectations” in demonstrating how students have internalized these messages, with the best students quite clearly in the “exceptional” range.

ANTY425: Social Organization
Professor: Dr. Larry Carucci

Assessment by: Dr. Larry Carucci

Learning Outcomes: Research

Social Organization is a Capstone course in Anthropology designed to complement material learned in Anthropological Theory and focused on a comprehensive senior-level understanding of how anthropologists have approached this central topic since the inception of anthropology in the second half of the nineteenth century. Therefore, the course provides a history of social organizational theory (and kinship theory has been at the core of anthropology since its inception) as well as an investigation into several recent approaches to the topic. Shifting research methods are inextricably intertwined with the outcomes of research in social organization and students learn about the different methodological approaches and their outcomes throughout the course. Students are also expected to complete a research project and approximately 1/3 of the course is focused on this project.

Students always design their own research projects, but in Spring Term of 2012, they were encouraged to use active, grounded, ethnographic methods to inquire into the principles that members of their own families used to define what kinship and family relationships were all about. As an option, students were encouraged to see how residence might be implicated in the redefinition of interpersonal relationships through the life cycle. Finally, one archaeology student, by special arrangement with the instructor, focused his inquiry on the difficulties encountered in the attempt to "read" gendered activity out of the material cultural remains investigated by archaeologists.

The entire class began the research process with a discussion of the parameters of research in the field, ethical concerns, and the reasoning behind the IRB process. While most students in anthropology are all ready CITI certified, those who were not completed their CITI certifications, and each student submitted a research proposal detailing the focus of their project by the beginning of the third week of class. Once projects were approved by the MSU IRB, students began their research, consulting with Professor Carucci throughout the term at any point a student encountered any research difficulty. Most of these concerns had to do with developing a narrower and more focused research question that could be addressed in reasonable depth within the time constraints presented by the term. For those students desiring early feedback, early drafts received detailed comment. These were due early in April, with the final projects (typically research papers of 15-30 pages supported with outside comparative sources and appended field research notes) due during the final week of Spring Term.

In terms of content, two students dedicated the main part of their research inquiry into residential concerns, though a few other class members also considered changing residence patterns as one critical factor influencing the shifting nature of interpersonal relationships within their own families. In one of the residence-focused projects, the student researcher looked at the ways in which the move from a long-standing family

residence into a long-term care facility was envisioned by seniors who had experienced such a move. Both survey and interview methods were involved in this inquiry. The perspectives of the seniors were then compared with the views of two staff members at this long-term care facility in order to see the strategies used to make the long-term care setting "home-like" and to see the success or failure of this strategy in the eyes of the residents of the care facility. The second residence-focused research project relied on extended interviews with college-aged students to come to understand what effects shifting residence (from their families of orientation to the university setting) had on the identity constructs of these students. This research was exemplary in terms of its depth and focus.

Remaining members of the class interviewed numerous members of their families and more extended relatives to assess what the key principles were used to define what kinship was all about. Most of the students discovered that these principles were largely subconscious and people just took them for granted. Secondly, many discovered that there was some agreement of the nature of the underlying principles, there was also substantial variation in which principles were stressed. The best students could then identify the way in which these variations among their relatives were related to the social positioning of each person within the larger social field. Finally, several students also noted correlations with other social organizational researchers in the field who have noted that through time, American kinship is slowly being reconceived in a fashion that includes more individual "intent". This, of course, correlates with the increasing sense at the cultural level that individual choices really make a difference in how people live their lives. And, ironically, this cultural stress on the importance of individual choice itself correlates with the decreased amount of control that individuals actually have over the course of their lives at the level of social practice.

In cultural terms, this means there is a shift in the idea that "blood is thicker than water" (once a kinsperson, always a kinsperson) toward a newer construction of "fashioned kinship" (my family or kinship group is made up of immediate consociates who act properly and I feel "close to"). The most sophisticated students correlated their research findings with other materials we read during the term along with outside published sources. In every instance, ethnographic inquiry by the students should have been aligned with other research in the field as one requirement of the course.

Overall, all students in this class demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the methods of research inquiry in the field of anthropology. Each student used appropriate ethnographic methods to acquire the materials needed to ground their research and each student was able to use those field research materials as a primary source to ground their general analysis. In all cases, students allowed their readers to "hear the voices" of those whom they interviewed, often using appropriate quotations from their interviews. Most students also grounded their findings in comparative published sources in a meaningful way, and the best students were able to point out how their own research not only corroborated some of the most recent research findings in social organizational theory, but also may have led in certain new, innovative directions.

To quantify the research outcomes of this course, I have used the scores on the research project as the data source and aligned the outcomes with the proposed scoring method. That scoring method as defined in the document that outlines the anthropology learning outcomes is:

Scale:

Unacceptable	1	(for graded assignments = D, D-, or F)
Minimally acceptable	2	(for graded assignments = D+/C-)
Acceptable	3	(for graded assignments = C/C+)
Exceeds expectation	4	(for graded assignments = B's or A-)
Exceptional	5	(for graded assignments = A/A+)

With fifteen students submitting projects, the average score on the project was 87.33. In accord with the scale noted above, this suggests that, as a whole, the class **“exceeds expectations”** for the research-learning outcome. On a student-by-student basis, 2 students completed projects in the “exceptional” category and 3 students were on the border that separates “exceptional” and “exceeds expectation”. On the other hand, 2 students were in the “acceptable” range and 1 student was on the border that separates “exceeds expectation” from “acceptable”. All remaining members of the class were in the “exceeds expectation” range.

It should be noted that one (1) student failed the course by not submitting a drop form, but that student completed only one of three exams and did not submit a research project. With the exception of one day in early April, this student stopped attending class on March 9th, prior to Spring Break. That student is not included in the research assessment since the research project was not completed and no research materials were submitted.

As the long-standing instructor for this course, I have no doubt that this class (along with Anthropological Theory) is successful in teaching students how to conduct hands-on research using appropriate anthropological methods. The best proof of this is not the claim of the professor nor the quantitative measures, but comes from students who have now completed graduate school and return to note that they not only understood the appropriate theory to a far greater degree than any of their fellow graduate students, they also knew how to conduct sophisticated anthropological research from having done so in these two capstone anthropology courses (Social Organization and Anthropological Theory) as well as in other classes in the anthropology curriculum.

Assessment by: Dr. Tomomi Yamaguchi
Learning Outcomes: Research

As a capstone course in Anthropology, Social Organization requires students to engage in their own ethnographic research project as the major assignment for the course. In Spring Term of 2012, many students conducted in-depth interviews with the members of their own families on their definitions and conceptualizations on kinship and family relationships. There were also students who chose to study the implication of residence on one's interpersonal relationships and his/her definition of "home."

In order to conduct ethnographic field research for the class, students had to acquire necessary knowledge of research methods and ethical issues. They obtained CITI certification and applied for IRB approval. Students were also required to spend significant amount of time interviewing people, transcribing the interview data, analyzing the materials in detail, and discussing them utilizing various theories of kinship that they learned in class.

I read several of the students' research projects for the class. While there was the range in the quality of students' papers, all papers, even the weaker ones, clearly conducted in-depth interviews with their own family members or interviews on residence locales people inhabited around Bozeman, and they presented the research results as the basis for their analyses. The papers clearly show students' following necessary ethical guidelines and having acquired methodological skills appropriate for a senior-level sociocultural anthropology capstone course.

All papers not only presented their research results, but also demonstrated their analyses – although to varying degrees – by utilizing theoretical perspectives learned in the course. Students especially used anthropologist David Schneider's work on kinship to support their own analyses of the conceptualization of kinship of their own family members. Even mediocre papers that include some misunderstandings and a lack of in-depth grasp of Schneider and other kinship theories, still attempted to incorporate theoretical perspectives in their analyses. Stronger papers went much more in depth in their analyses of ethnographic data, incorporating not only theories learned in class but also several outside sources to support their analyses.

Writing is another crucial component in anthropological research, and while some weaker papers still have some writing issues in terms of grammar and organization, above average students successfully presented their argument on the construction of kinship, family, locality and "home" in the United States, in a manner more than appropriate for senior level college students. Their sentences, along with organizations, showed major improvement from what I typically see in lower-division and mid-level Anthropology courses.

As a result of the above assessment, it is clear to me that the learning outcomes on research were successfully met in this course. In most cases, I would judge the learning outcomes on average to fall in the "exceeds expectation" range.

Learning Outcomes Summary for Spring 2012 ANTHROPOLOGY FACULTY RESPONSE

The members of the Anthropology Program met to review the implementation of our assessment plan for Spring Term 2011. The initial reviews were of two upper-division courses. One of these was Anthropology 343, Popular Culture In/Out of Japan, which was assessed to ascertain the success in accomplishing the learning outcome to "learn to analyze multi-cultural and global issues." The second course was Anthropology 425, Social Organization, which was assessed to measure the learning outcome to "acquire research skills that include the acquisition, analysis, and synthesis of research materials in a report format, as appropriate to the course" The respective enrollments for these courses were 29 students (Popular Culture) and 17 students (Social Organization). Our review procedures entail having the course instructor use the relevant criteria to review his/her own course and also have the second specialist in this sub-discipline of anthropology (in this case, the second instructor at MSU with expertise in Social and Cultural Anthropology) read a sub-set of the materials submitted by students for the course to see if the relevant criteria has been met.

Using the two projects submitted for Popular Culture, the instructor (Dr. Yamaguchi) determined that, overall, the course had exceeded expectation (4 on a scale of 5) in meeting the learning outcome. The second reviewer, Dr. Carucci, reading a sub-set of these two projects, agreed that the course had exceeded expectation (4 on a scale of 5) in providing students with an opportunity to learn and analyze multi-cultural and global issues. For the second course, Social Organization, the instructor (Dr. Carucci) assessed that the course had exceeded expectation (4 on a scale of 5) in providing students with research opportunities and skills that included "the acquisition, analysis, and synthesis of research materials in a report format." The second reviewer, Dr. Yamaguchi, independently reading several of the student's projects, agreed that the course exceeded expectation in providing students with research opportunities and assisting them in developing the skills to gather, analyze, and synthesize research materials in a report format.

As a faculty, we believe our curriculum is one of the exemplary locations on campus where students learn to analyze multi-cultural and global issues in a sophisticated analytic manner. Our curriculum stresses research projects in most courses from the sophomore to senior levels, thereby preparing students early on to engage in research activities.. The capstone courses, including Social Organization, provide students with meaningful research opportunities that encourage them to apply relatively sophisticated abilities to acquire, analyze, and synthesize these research materials in one of several viable reporting formats.

The two courses assessed here have exceeded expectations for the selected criteria. At the same time, both courses successfully meet the broader learning outcomes designated for all courses within the anthropology curriculum.

Curricular changes: None recommended