

Memorandum

To: William Myers, CAS Assessment Coordinator

From: Ryan Harrod, Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology

Date: 15 October, 2019

RE: Assessment of BA/BS Program for Anthropology

Assessment Process

During the 2013-2014 academic year the Department of Anthropology realized that we were not effectively tracking how well our students were progressing through the BA and BS programs. Between 2015 and 2018 we focused on our required courses and highlighted which assignments were useful for measuring student success and we collected grades that students received in these classes as a way to track the information they learned. What we found was that our assessment measure were not nearly effective enough to allow us to track student progress.

During the Fall 2017 semester Dr. Kristen Ogilvie chaired a curriculum committee for the department that recommended we standardize the way we measure student success in our program. The problem with the old program was that simply tracking increases or decreases in grades over the semester does not reflect whether a student improved as they advance through the course. The new assessment tools proposed by Dr. Ogilvie are designed to provide baseline, formative, and summative data. The new program still tracks progress of students in the classes but it includes assessment surveys at the 200-level, 300-level, and 400-level.

At the beginning of a 200-level course, students will take a survey in class or on Blackboard to determine a baseline for that student's knowledge of the discipline of anthropology, and then there will be a follow-up survey at the end of the course. Surveys will also be given to two ethnographic, two topical/theoretical, and two methodology courses at the 300- to 400-level. Finally, in the final capstone course (ANTH A410) students will complete an Anthropology ePortfolio in which students will reflect on their accomplishments in each of the five program outcomes. Additionally, a final exit survey will also be given in there will be a follow

Measures:

- a) % of anthropology majors correctly answering questions about knowledge of the four subfields of anthropology.
- b) % of anthropology majors reporting growth in knowledge of the four subfields of anthropology.

Evidence

- a) Artifacts of four-field knowledge presented by graduating anthropology majors in ePortfolio reflections.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of theoretical approaches in anthropology, their foundations, and the issues they are designed to address.

Measures:

- a) % of anthropology majors correctly answering questions about anthropological theory.
- b) % of anthropology majors reporting growth in knowledge of anthropological theory.

Evidence

- a) Artifacts of anthropological theory knowledge presented by graduating anthropology majors in ePortfolio reflections.
3. Explain ethical practice in anthropological research and issues encountered in the discipline.

Measures:

- a) % of anthropology majors correctly answering questions about anthropological ethics.
- b) % of anthropology majors reporting growth in knowledge of anthropological ethics.

Evidence

- a) Artifacts of awareness of anthropological ethics presented by graduating anthropology majors in ePortfolio reflections.
4. Exhibit proficiency in documenting, evaluating, and communicating anthropological information, including perspectives relevant to Alaska and the Circumpolar North.

Measures:

- a) % of anthropology majors who meet GER proficiency standards for communication skills and information literacy skills on select assignments at different levels in the program.

- b) % of anthropology majors reporting growth in knowledge of finding and communicating anthropological evidence.

Evidence

- a) Artifacts of information literacy and communication skills presented by graduating anthropology majors in ePortfolio reflections.

- 5. Apply anthropological methods and techniques to research questions and practical problems.

Measures:

- a) Average # of anthropological methods/techniques anthropology majors can identify.
- b) % of anthropology majors reporting growth in knowledge of anthropological methods.

Question	T	F	Blank	Answer	% Correct
The hallmark of cultural anthropology as a field science is participant observation	25	8	1	T	

Question

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ANTH A210

confidence. As students progress through the program and we exit surveys in our 300-level and 400-level courses to identify if they have a better idea of the work researchers in each of the four sub-disciplines perform. When the question was asked among students in ANTH A390B about biological anthropologists, fifty percent felt confident they could describe how they collect and analyzes data from the field. This compares to twenty-five percent of students reporting they could at least probably explain the work biological anthropologists do.

How students answer a particular question can illustrate a lot about what we are assessing but it does not reveal how students perceive their own knowledge outcomes as they progress through the course. To get at this data we looked at aggregate scores on the baseline knowledge surveys given at the beginning and

allows the individual student to reflect on what they learned. For this assessment four faculty members in our department independently scored the section of the ePortfolio called " Anthropological Informational and Communicative Competency" where students are prompted by the instructor (Dr. Ogilvie) to provide the following: