

California State University, Fullerton
Program Performance Review: Division of Anthropology
External Review Report

External Review Committee

Dr. Henry Delcore

Professor of Anthropology, California State University, Fresno

Dr. Lynn Gamble

Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Barbara

Dr. Carrie Lane

Professor of American Studies, California State University, Fullerton

Dr. Sang-Hee Lee

Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Riverside

Overall Assessment

The Anthropology Division started as a result of the restructuring of the Anthropology Department. The Division has three Programs: Archaeology, Cultural Anthropology, and Evolutionary Anthropology. The Division does not have a chair, but instead each of the three programs has its own Coordinator. After a period of receivership, the Division started to accept a new cohort of undergraduate students in Fall 2013 and graduate students in Fall 2015.

The restructuring has been highly effective. Thanks to sustained efforts on the part of all Division faculty, especially the three Program Coordinators, the Division has attained an impressive level of stability. We applaud the Division for all it has accomplished in the short time since its restructuring. We recommend that in the coming years the Division continue its efforts to strengthen itself equitably across all programs, while working together to create a shared vision for the long-term future.

Commendations

- Restructuring: The restructured organization of three programs within a Division has been effective in stabilizing the community and allowing the healing and recovery process for various constituents of the community. Faculty report that they have been able to both work together (across programs) under the new structure

and to focus on needed improvements within programs. No faculty voiced a desire to alter the structure in the short term.

- **Growth:** In just a few short years, the Division has rebuilt its undergraduate and graduate programs to an impressive degree, recruiting high numbers of new students and effectively serving students' intellectual and pre-professional needs.
- **Faculty:** The faculty members of the Anthropology Division are exceptionally productive, as teachers, scholars, and members of their professional and local communities. We applaud their impressive and ongoing accomplishments in the form of peer-reviewed publications, success in obtaining grant funding, prominent roles in professional organizations, enabling student success within and outside the classroom, and much more. There are many outstanding examples of scholarly faculty accomplishments, including highly recognized books and articles, as well as significant competitive external grants. We recognize these exceptional professional activities, especially given the heavy teaching loads.
- **Programs and Initiatives:** The Division serves as home to a number of successful programs and initiatives, including U-ACRE (Urban Agriculture Community-based Research Experience) project, the Coverdell Fellows Program, Center for Ethnographic and Cultural Analysis, and the Center for Sustainability. Its faculty have also established strong and sustained relationships with local and international organizations such as the Peace Corps, Cooper Center, American Heart Association, and US Forest Service, among others. These relationships have enhanced CSUF's local and international reputation, while also establishing numerous opportunities for service-learning, internships, and other HIPs for undergraduate and graduate students.
- **Graduate Program:** We commend the Division faculty for the excellent job they are doing supporting and advising their graduate students. The graduate students we spoke with all praised the program and its faculty. They receive frequent one-on-one academic and career advising as well as more formal events offering information and advice on pursuing graduate school and careers in anthropology. Graduate students also praised the experiences they gained with the Brazil field school, NAGPRA, and conference presentations. One student noted the welcome recent diversification of the faculty. We also recognize the diversity of the graduate students that met with us and their confidence as young scholars. It is clear that the faculty have done an outstanding job in mentoring them.

- Undergraduate Program: We commend the Division’s forward-thinking plan to establish certificates or minors in Forensic Anthropology and Museum Studies. These represent timely, promising initiatives that will serve as important tools for recruiting students and preparing them for careers in and beyond applied anthropology.
- Staff: The Division staff members feel well-supported and report satisfaction with existing Division processes. We commend the staff for their professional support of the Division, despite the complications of the tripartite system.

Recommendations

- Coming together as a community: Considering the internal strife of previous years, the Division has achieved an admirable level of congeniality among its faculty. We encourage the Division to create additional opportunities for faculty to come together across programs—formally and informally—with the goal of eventually holding regular all-faculty Division meetings. These gatherings could take the form of social activities, student-centered events like commencement receptions or graduate student colloquia, or mentoring relationships between associate and assistant professors.
- Selection of Chair in the long term: Although the current structure of Programs is effective and helpful, having a single chair in the long-term would be more effective for many reasons, including optimal utilization of some resources. For example, service obligations are currently quite high in the Division, since each program maintains its own committee structure. The program coordinator roles also demand a high level of service, and it is unclear whether this demand can be easily fulfilled once the excellent service of those who were present for the initial restructure leave their roles. If the College and Division faculty can find the right person to serve as Chair, then that person might be able to provide the leadership needed to find common ground on issues of curriculum, which are a source of friction between programs. Faculty of the Division were generally in favor of an eventual return to a department structure with a single chair. Nobody expressed an opinion for a return to a single department structure in the near future; several were clearly against the idea of ever returning to a single department structure; those who expressed the opinion in favor of a single department structure timed it in the distant future (“in ten years”) to make it a realistic plan to work towards.
- Balanced growth among Programs: We recommend that the Division begin working toward the long-term goal of reuniting as a department maintaining three distinct, autonomous programs headed by a single chair. Although the Division has come a

long way, it is clear that some still hold the perception that accommodations and compromises that were necessary for the rebuilding of the program were not equally and fairly borne out by the three programs, with some programs having been more negatively impacted than others. We recommend that the Division not pursue strategies—such as formalizing the boundaries between programs in the form of formal concentrations—that would further divide the Division, rather than bind it more closely together.

- Hiring plan: We recommend that the Division as a whole develop a long-term plan for its future, including a 5-10 year hiring plan, with the goal of recruiting more faculty at the assistant professor level in order to facilitate growth and obtain “generational” balance across professorial ranks. It is crucial that, as retirements inevitably set in, new assistant and associate professors are moving through the ranks, ensuring that the Division can meet its teaching and service obligations. In particular, the archaeology program, which currently is the smallest in size (with four faculty members), has not had any new faculty since 2008.
- Curriculum: The Division restructuring entailed dividing up ANTH courses across programs, a move that has alleviated major areas of tension between faculty and programs, but has also created a problematic sense of competition and ownership concerning which courses are offered, and by whom. We recognize that this remains a sensitive area, but urge the Division to look for opportunities to foster curricular development in both undergraduate and graduate programs through a mindset of collaboration and mutual trust, rather than competition or ownership, especially in supporting curricular innovation among new faculty.
- Workload: We recommend that the Division reach out to the budget manager for the College of H&SS to discuss paths by which they might secure a 3-3 teaching load for all faculty across the Division (while individual faculty may still take on 4-4 loads if they so choose). We believe this will be more in line with many other departments in the College.
- Resources: We recommend that the existing Division computer lab be renovated into a more functional classroom space, for example by making it possible for the computers to be lowered down into the tables or desks. The committee also supports the Division’s decision to modify the existing museum exhibit space into a multi-use area so that it may be used more often and for more varied purposes. We encourage the Division to develop more exhibits, especially once the Museum Studies program is initiated. We also encourage the Division to more actively integrate the South Central Coastal Information Center and the Cooper Center into

their curricula. Both centers provide excellent opportunities for internships, training, and hands-on activities for undergraduate and graduate students.

- **Advising:** We recommend that the Division consider a more formalized approach to undergraduate advising, as the current model seems to place an especially heavy undergraduate advising burden on just a few faculty members. No faculty complained about this load, but it might be productive to spread the work of advising more evenly across faculty or offer one or two faculty members assigned time for handling undergraduate advising.
- **Enrollment:** We recommend that the H&SS Dean's Office consider raising the unofficial "cap" on sections of ANTH 101. There are sound reasons to maintain some limit on the number of sections offered, to both maintain inter-college relations and avoid furthering the Division's dependence on GE enrollments. Nevertheless, a few more sections of ANTH 101 would meet high student demand.
- **Recruitment:** The Division is pursuing multiple means of recruiting additional BA and MA students. The committee recommends a few additional means of recruitment that have proven successful for other small CSUF departments that recruit heavily from GE courses. Specifically, the Division might consider the following: 1) have tenured or tenure-track faculty visit GE courses taught by lecturers (who cannot serve as advisors or enroll majors) once a semester to promote the major and gather email addresses of interested students, who can then be emailed directly with specifics on what courses they would need to take to complete a major/minor in anthropology; 2) have all faculty who teach online courses email students who receive A grades to encourage them to consider majoring or minoring in anthropology or enrolling in internships; 3) utilize campus resources (H&SS PR staff and/or the Academic Technology Center) to create a publicity video for the Division that could be shown in GE courses and added to the website; and 4) set up booths for recruitment at conferences.

Summary

We realize the new Division structure is a result of past difficulties in the department and that they have done an extraordinary job in stabilizing the Division, a task that has demonstrated their commitment to the discipline and the desire to continue as a unit. We view the Division as still in a transitory and somewhat delicate state, but nevertheless think there are steps that can be taken both in the short and long-term that will benefit students, faculty, and staff, with one goal of continuing to maintain national recognition of the unit.