Précis

Program Performance Review

Anthropology, BA, MA

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Jack Bedell, PhD Chair

Background

The Department of Anthropology conducted a program performance review during the 2009-10 academic year. A self-study was completed. The self-study was reviewed by the Visiting Team. Members of the Visiting included: Sang-Hee-Lee, Department of Anthropology, UC-Riverside, Hector Neff, Department of Anthropology CSU-Long Beach, Dorothy Willis, Department of Geography and Anthropology, CSU Pomona and James Hoffman, Department of Liberal Studies CSU- Fullerton. The Visiting Team also reviewed documents and interviewed the Dean, faculty, staff and students and provided a report of findings which included recommendations. The Dean submitted a summary and recommendations and the Chair submitted a response to the report of the Visiting Team. The Visiting Team commended the self-study of the department as comprehensive both descriptive and statistical.

Key Data

The Anthropology department has maintained a steady growth in annualized head count over the last five years in 2004 total annualized headcount was 133 in 2007-08 the number was 146.5. Most of the enrollment in the department comes via General Education – General Education accounts for 80% of enrollment in the department. The graduation rate is 67-90% for upper division transfer cohorts who graduate in 6 years or less compared to 70-74% for University overall. The department has developed a growth initiative to bolster its enrollment profile and increase the number of majors. Eighty percent of MA students who accept admission to the program enroll. The head count in the MA program is 83 down from 94 in 2006 entrance GPA has been raised.

Key Issues

Not able to include Linguistics the department will stress a three field focus for its curriculum students can develop concentrations in cultural anthropology, evolutionary anthropology and archaeology. This curriculum should be articulated and made available to students. A key issue is to resolve the internecine strife that has plagued the department recently. The self-study reports that an outside Chair and mediator were brought in to help unify the department. In addition, the Visiting Team notes that not every faculty member spoke (or were forthright) during conversations prompting members of the team to conclude that there maybe some underlying bad feelings that persist. Closely related to this issue is the role of the department in the selection of the next Chair. The Visiting Team recommends fairness and transparency in all departmental decision making. The department offers online undergraduate courses and intends

to implement an online BA program. What is the status of the implementation of the online BA degree program? The department should review space allocation, and related resource facilities including centers e.g. South Central Coastal Information Center, Center for Ethnographic Analysis, Teaching Museum, with a focus on how to maximize use and efficiency.

Outcomes Assessment

The department of Anthropology is regarded as a leader in the implementation of outcomes assessment on campus.   In 2009 the department was awarded the inaugural Advancement in Assessment Award for its use of indirect and direct methods of assessment including e-portfolios. In addition the department has developed curriculum mapping aligning learning outcomes with courses and assessment measures and strategies. (See Exhibit 3 Sample Course Planning Grid.). The department is forefront amongst academic units in the "articulation of University Mission, Goals and Strategies with the Department". The Visiting Team noted that such efforts of aligning student learning outcomes, objectives and vision with university mission and goals was "especially impressive." The department reports that it will use the assessment program to expand the depth and breadth of the undergraduate and graduate curriculum. One way this can be accomplished is the articulation of indicators of quality or benchmarks. The self-study alludes to this in the section titled *Quality and Performance* for example one such goal students will be involved in research the quality indicator: "we will require all students to be involved in research by 2012". Indicators of quality should be delineated and amplified in the context of department effectiveness and as hallmarks of success. Importantly, the department has begun to use data for change and improvement. Such use will no doubt increase as the assessment infrastructure (capacity) continues to be strengthened. It appears that the department has inculcated an assessment "culture" and several of its faculty have become campus leaders in University wide assessment initiatives.

Outlook

The faculty of the department of Anthropology unanimously approved in 2007 *Visions and Goals* which is essentially a planning document that covers such topics as leadership and governance, quality and performance and growth and development. It is roadmap for a successful and effective department when implemented. The department seems clear now on its curriculum which will stress a three field focus and approach identified above. It has adopted a strategy to increase the quality of graduate students and has identified a goal to increase the number of majors by 10% over the next several years by promoting the major to incoming freshmen. The research and scholarship of the faculty was identified as being "very high" by the Visiting Team. Assessment of student learning is a critical aspect of the mission of the department and it is a campus leader in this regard. The critical challenge for the department is to find ways to unify factions/three caucuses for the greater good as articulated in its vision and goals. Presently, the department is in the process of selecting a new Chair. This appointment is critical to the well-being of the department. This is a strong department and has the potential to

be even stronger. Its profile on campus has been enhanced by leadership in assessment. The Visiting Team was impressed with the strength and dynamism of the Anthropology department.

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Gerald W. Patton

Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness