Educational Program Institutional Effectiveness Summary 2008 - 2011

Degree Program: Bachelor of Arts Anthropology
College/School: College of Arts and Sciences
Department: Anthropology
Submission Date: January 31, 2012

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate
1. understanding of the origins of cultural and biological diversity.
2. knowledge of the history of anthropology and contemporary issues in the discipline.
3. a. knowledge of approaches to understanding the sociocultural aspects of the human experience.
   b. knowledge of methods, objectives, and issues in archaeology
   c. knowledge of the biological diversity of the human species.
4. effective and clear communication.

Assessment Methods

1. The Academic Profile provides the faculty a unique opportunity to discuss each major and develop a multi-faceted evaluation of each students’ abilities (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4-written)
2. Student presentations in ANT 316, 324, 434, 440 and 445, scored using AAC&U Oral Communication rubric, and discussed at the Academic Profile meeting (SLO 4-oral)
3. Anthropology Exit Test (SLOs 2, 3a, 3b, 3c)
4. Student papers in ANT 450 scored using a rubric (SLO 4-written)

Summary of Assessment Results

Upon reflection our faculty agreed that we should have learning outcomes that are fitted more specifically to each our three sub-disciplines. As a result, Learning Outcome 3 was expanded into the three parts listed above. Each of the existing SLOs has been assessed once or twice in the last three years.

SLO 1 was assessed in 2010-2011 using the post-semester Academic Profile. The average score overall (on a 5-point scale) was 3.61 in the fall semester and 3.88 in the spring semester. Faculty observed a pattern that some students performed at a high level in the subfield of their major interest, but underperformed in other subfields.

SLO 2 was assessed in 2009-2010 using an Anthropology Exit Test. The mean score was 78 out of 100. In Fall 2010 this test was replaced by a new dimension on the post-semester Academic Profile. In Fall 2010, the mean score on the profile was 3.36 and in spring it was 2.64.

SLO 3a was assessed in Fall 2009 using the Anthropology Exit Test. The mean score was 78 out of 100. In Spring 2010, this SLO was assessed using the Post-semester Academic Profile. The mean score on the profile was 3.72 out of 5.

SLO 3b was assessed in Fall 2009 using the Anthropology Exit Test. The mean score was 74 out of 100. In Spring 2010, this SLO was assessed using the Post-semester Academic Profile. The mean score on the profile was 3.97 out of 5. Three students had difficulty with demonstrating knowledge of theory, and two...
students displayed poor work skills. The faculty reviewed course content, and felt that no curricular changes were needed, but agreed to communicate the importance of methods, objectives, and issues as needed.

SLO 3c was addressed in Fall 2009 using the Anthropology Exit Test. The mean score was 50 out of 100. In Spring 2010, this SLO was assessed using the Post-semester Academic Profile. The mean score on the profile was 3.33 out of 5. Faculty were concerned by these findings and made recommendations for changes.

SLO 4 was assessed in 2008-2009 using papers from Ant 450. Student scores ranged between 3.2 and 4.2 on a 5-point scale. In 2010-2011, the VALUE Oral Communication rubric was used to assess presentations in ANT 316, 324, 435, 440, and 445. The mean score in Fall 2010 was 3.85 on a 5-point scale; in Spring 2011, the mean score was 4.

**Implemented Improvements Based on Assessment Results**

Based the scores from both the Exit Test and Academic Profile, faculty decided that student knowledge for SLO 2 needed to be improved. They developed a team-taught senior seminar on a single topic dealing with human diversity. One faculty member from each of the three subfields will contribute a module that will present that subfield’s methodology, theory, and literature relevant to the semester topic. In tandem with ANT 450, this seminar will help students appreciate and understand the importance of Anthropology’s integrated, holistic approach to human and biological diversity.

To increase student understanding of SLO 3a, faculty began assigning searches for current news stories or web information in order to encourage student interest and illustrate contemporary relevance. An example exercise from ANT 316 is given below.

Based on concerns about scores on SLO 3c, the faculty decided that biological diversity of the human species would be the primary theme of relevant biological anthropology courses. These courses adopted a “biocultural” approach to human biological diversity, emphasizing genes, culture and environment as the primary contributors to the process. Course assignments now highlight this theme, and students work with data collected from actual human populations. The ANT 324 syllabus highlights this new approach, and the ANT 292 Course Action Form and Syllabus highlight the three-field approach noted in the first paragraph of the Summary of Assessment Results.

Based on writing scores in 2008-2009, beginning in Fall 2009, one class period of ANT 301 has been devoted to an explanation of the relationship between choice of topic, thesis, and written body of a paper.

**Documentation of Implemented Improvements**

- ANT 450 Syllabus.doc
- ANT 316 Ej Exercise.doc
- ANT 324 Syllabus.doc
- ANT 292 Course Action Form.pdf
- ANT 292 East Asia seminar syllabus.docx
- ANT 301 syllabus.docx