

PROGRAM REVIEW: Anthropology

1. Description of Program:

Anthropology has always supported equity, academic achievement and excellence, community involvement and inclusive governance. Anthropology teaches that “race”, although an existing social construct, is not a biological classification and consequently is in solidarity with the college’s goals of eradicating any kind of “racial” or other forms of discrimination, terrorism or alienation.

The goals of anthropology include promoting the understanding that there is only one race, the human race, and while classifying people into racial stereotypes may be useful for some purposes, it also perpetuates what could be classified as a social caste system in the U.S. and the world in general. Anthropology also discusses the concept of gender and explores areas of ethnicity, religion and other aspects of culture.

The anthropology program works closely with the learning communities, EOPS and the athletic departments to ensure that minority students receive the extra attention and opportunities that can contribute to their success as students. Participation in campus events, presentations and field trips gives students in anthropology the opportunities to be involved with ethnic events and enables students to make personal connections to other students on campus and online, especially in Cultural Anthropology (Anth 110), since an understanding of culture is essential to these goals.

Students who have been impacted by Covid have felt isolated and have been unable, until recently, to attend many cultural events, field trips and museums in person, however online museums and events have been available to help students through this difficult time in their education. The instructor continues to participate in workshops at Stanford University, Asian Art Museum, DeYoung Museum, California Academy of Sciences to revise and augment courses. Students are encouraged to attend Farmers’ Markets to meet local farmers in our community and understand their own health and nutrition.

Currently there are no federal, state or local initiatives that have impacted the anthropology program and students.

Anthropology, like the rest of the college, has seen some decline in enrollment due to Covid, from 349 students in 2018-19, 336 in 2019-20, to 287 in 2020-21. WSCH for 2018-19 was 918.4, for 2019-20 = 1080.0 and in 2020-21 = 939.0, FTES for the same years: 34.9, 36, 31.3 and Load (WSCH/FTEF) for the same years = 918.4, 947.4, 823.7 with one Adjunct FTEF.

2. Results of Previous Program Review:

Previous action plans included improving success for minority students, particularly those involved in our learning communities: Mana, Umoja, Puente, and EOPS students. In the past, I have served as an advisor for Umoja and attended the Summer Learning Institute and completed a Stanford University EPIC fellowship based on the diet of students in the Mana learning community. One of my previous mentees in Umoja was unable to obtain a real estate license due to some legal complications, and I personally went to the real estate board in Oakland and helped her retain an attorney and achieve a restricted license. I introduced her to a Coldwell Banker manager and she is currently working as a licensed realtor.

To address equity gaps, anthropology does not require prerequisites and as an instructor, I allow resubmission of work for additional points, for example exam essays may be rewritten to

earn extra points. Students have been supported by tutors in the Learning Center and a lab assistant in Anth 127 lab class.

Success rates for students in Umoja learning community for the college was 63.4% but in anthropology, “African American” students was slightly higher at 64.7%. “Hispanic” students were succeeding at rate of 83%, “White” students at 87.9% and “Asian-Domestic” students were achieving 100% success. This suggests that our “African American” students continue to need additional support, as well as our “Pacific Islander” students, who seem to have had difficulty in the conversion from campus classes to online classes, since the success rate in anthropology fluctuated from 70.4% in 2018-19 down to 44% in 2019-20 then back up a bit in 2020-21 to 56.3%. It may also be due to the disconnect of not being physically on campus with their peers in Mana and their advisor, Fi Tovo, who personally tracks and advises the students.

Changes in the anthropology program were dramatic, since on campus courses had to be covered to online courses coupled with Zoom classes online due to Covid. This made the Anth 127 lab course difficult to teach effectively online at this time and after one semester, it was decided to not offer the course again until we are back on campus.

The Anthropology Department has grown over the years from a few courses to 5 courses including a AA_T degree by implementing the planning cycle and ensuring financial stability and efficient use of resources. Anthropology has worked closely with administration and other faculty and staff in developing new courses and a degree program. A close relationship with EOPS and Learning Community advisors has been helpful in retaining students. Coaches for the athletic teams, especially the football coaches, have been very supportive and have contributed to the success of these students. The gender ratio has increased in male enrollment (2020-21: 115 females, 166 males, 6 unrecorded gender, probably from the support of the football coaches. Some of these students need to take “Incompletes” in anthropology courses in order to succeed, but this success may not be reported in success rates, since those statistics may not include students who complete incomplete coursework the following semester(s).

3. Current Program Review

(a) Student population equity

Gaps in student success are focused on students who identify as “African American/ Black” students and “Pacific Islander” students who may also fall into the category of “First Generation College” and “Low Income Status”. For example, in 2020-21, “First Generation College” students succeeded at a rate of 68.4% in anthropology, while students who were not “First Generation College” succeeded at 87.7% and “Low Income” students succeeded at a rate of 69.2%, while “Not Low Income” were at 82.4%. Clearly, income and parental influence are significant factors, particularly in having internet access, computers and the skills associated with online work. Transportation may also affect some students, since many of these students live out of the area and commute great distances for on campus events and classes when applicable. Food insecurity continues to be a concern for students and anthropology supported a food program before the college and Second Harvest began to supplement students’ needs, but with online classes, students were not on campus regularly to receive supplementary resources.

Some students were able to get loaner laptops and hot spots for internet to assist them in accessing online courses. The library and Learning Center were not open during Covid for students to access Reserve textbooks and materials, so this was also a financial issue for some students.

In the previous program review cycle, a lab cart and several microscopes were purchased for the Anth 127 course, which is a relatively new lab course, and we have been building up the materials needed for an effective lab course over the past few years but are still in need of many specimens to provide students with material for labs other than using photos, which do not work well for making measurements, etc.

Anthropology has been overall very successful with a 90-100% retention rate. Success for students with “Disability Status” is at 90.9%, in part due to the support of the DRC disability program at CSM. Over all success rates in anthropology have increased, from 2018-19 (76.2%) to 2019-20 (79.4%).

(b) Modes of Delivery equity

Due to Covid, online/Zoom courses were implemented and the anthropology instructor has taken several recent courses to improve online teaching and is currently developing an online interactive textbook with Great River Learning. The disparity in access to good technology, internet access and quality computers, cannot be underestimated as a factor that affects student success and retention in online classes. I have been as flexible as possible about accepting late submissions online and allowing make up work, since students who must work or do not have dependable access to computers and internet need this compensation to continue in a course.

(c) Discipline- Level and SLO assessment

Student Learning Objectives were reviewed by Madeleine Murphy and a new method of self evaluation has been applied. Future SLOs should include a component that reflects the online abilities for online courses.

(d) Challenges and Opportunities

The Covid pandemic has made it difficult in many respects to maintain ideal learning conditions, however the district has provided training and financial support to enable instructors to provide quality online instruction in an amazingly short amount of time.

4. Planning

(a) Program goals

The equity gap for “African American/Black” students and “Pacific Islander” students continues to be a concern for the college and the anthropology department. I will continue to offer my support to advisors of the Learning Communities and EOPS. A measurable outcome would be increased retention and academic success.

Future course development will include producing an online version of the archeology course to attract enrollment from university students and students from other areas, since archaeology is often a low enrolled course, but required for the anthropology majors. A summer field archaeology class is also a goal for the program. The instructor has previously taken students to the southern Channel Islands and to San Francisco to participate in archaeological fieldwork.

The addition of a new course, Medical Anthropology, was planned in a previous program review, however the Covid pandemic and red to develop all of the anthropology courses for online deliver, this was not yet possible and planned for the future. Another course that should be developed is an anthropology course about food, since there is not enough time to cover that topic adequately in Cultural Anthropology, and the diet and health of students is a concern expressed by athletic coaches about the students .

Future field trips will hopefully resume in the spring semester, students have enjoyed field trips in the past to the Gibbon Conservation Center in the Los Angeles area, to UCLA and to local museums for special exhibits and events.