

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

External Consultant Report

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REVIEW OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM AT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO, 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Review of the CSUS Anthropology Department revealed a highly competent faculty, serving enthusiastic undergraduate and graduate majors. The review also identified areas of the anthropology program that require attention, if the program is to achieve its full potential. Two of these areas require immediate plans of action: (1) Developing greater levels of faculty cooperation, based on shared ideas about curriculum objectives, fairness of faculty work patterns, and departmental governance; (2) strengthening the department's archaeological curation facility, bringing the operations of this valuable departmental resource more in line with prevailing professional and legal obligations. Scheduling of classes and academic advising were identified by students as important areas of needed improvement. Other areas of potential improvement included reconfiguring the anthropology departmental office, and devising more effective strategies for attracting part-time anthropology instructors.

BASIS OF THE VIEW

The author conducted a programmatic review of the Anthropology Department, California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) on 28 and 29 November, 2005. The department's facilities, including the departmental office, the Anthropology Museum and the archaeological curation center, were visited during this time. Discussions were conducted with most of the department's faculty (excepting some FERP faculty or faculty on leave), the departmental support staff, students (undergraduate and graduate), and with administrators, including the departmental chair (Dr. Beth Strasser), the head of the campus program review committee (Dr. Tom Krabacher), the interim Dean of the School of Social Sciences and International Studies (Dr. Otis Scott), and the CSUS Vice President of Academic Affairs (Dr. Mike Lee). A range of textual materials concerning the program were examined, including the department's 2004-05 self-study, faculty vitae and the recommendations of two previous program reviews.

The objective of this review was primarily to understand how well the anthropology program is serving the needs of the faculty and students, but was also mindful of the program's contributions to the general education objectives of the university, and the constraints that all academic departments operate under in the CSU.

FINDINGS: THE CHALLENGES OF DISCIPLINARY CHANGE

The current CSUS anthropology program reflects notable strengths and challenges. This situation stems from factors particular to the CSUS anthropology program but also appears to be rooted in forces that are widely problematic in the contemporary discipline

of anthropology. Both of these factors—local and disciplinary-- need to be taken into account in devising the future of the CSUS anthropology program. While this review is not intended to engage broader disciplinary issues in detail, the problems and prospects of the CSUS anthropology program cannot be diagnosed accurately without brief reference to some of the challenges faced by the discipline today.

The results of this review, based on the above perspective, are presented in three categories central to the functioning of the anthropology program: Faculty, Curriculum and Program Support. Recommendations are presented in the last section of the report.

FACULTY

Quality of the Faculty

The CSUS anthropology program has an excellent faculty. All of the full-time members of the department hold the Ph.D. degree, reflecting their training in many of the finest anthropology programs in the United States and Europe. Review of faculty curriculum vitae reveals a strong pattern of scholarship, including publications, participation in professional symposia, research grants and contracts and consulting with public and private agencies. The four traditional sub-fields of anthropology— cultural anthropology, archaeology, physical anthropology and linguistics—are all represented by well-trained, high-performing faculty members. Based on measures of teaching success, such as student evaluations, the faculty is also performing well in this core responsibility of all CSU academic departments. Moreover, many faculty members serve as mentors to graduate students, often contributing large amounts of uncompensated time and effort in helping these students to launch their own careers in anthropology. The department has also attracted a cadre of well trained and talented part-time instructors, whose contributions are vital to the major. Nearly all faculty members expressed a strong commitment to student welfare. The university is fortunate to have such a high-quality, dedicated faculty.

Faculty Conflict

As matters currently stand, these strengths cannot be applied to best advantage, owing to a high level of disagreement among anthropology faculty members about a series of important issues, including the purpose and content of the departmental curriculum (see the discussion of curriculum below), faculty workload distribution across the four sub-fields, and department governance.

Although significant issues emerged from each of the three areas mentioned above, none was more striking or problematic than faculty conflict. It is far from extraordinary, of course, that academic departments are home to faculty disagreements. Healthy academic fields contain intellectual competition and critique. So long as this competition does not run unchecked, it can be the engine of productive debate and professional creativity. Unfortunately, there is considerable evidence that faculty conflict has gotten

out of hand in the CSUS anthropology program. Full- and part-time faculty members, students, university administrators and program support staff all readily identified this conflict as having significant negative impacts on the anthropology program. Students fear being caught in faculty cross-fires and a decline in the quality of teaching by professors distracted by disputes with their colleagues; some faculty members report of levels of personal stress sufficient to make them seek employment elsewhere or to disengage from departmental affairs; administrators express frustration with the prospect of having to intervene, if conflict is not resolved within the department. It seems clear to everyone: The future health of the CSUS Anthropology program depends on solving this problem.

In part, the current conflict appears to be rooted in “generational” self-interest. Five faculty members were hired by the CSUS Anthropology Department in 2000-01 (including one who has since left the department), including a linguist, a physical anthropologist, archaeologist and cultural anthropologists. Two other faculty members, in physical and cultural anthropology, were hired between 1999 and 2001. Given this rapid shift in faculty composition, it is not surprising perhaps that the untenured faculty tends to identify itself as a cohort with mutual interests. Significantly, the junior faculty believes that it was hired to bring fresh perspectives to the anthropology program, including alterations to the goals and structure of the departmental curriculum that can better serve the intellectual interests of their generation of Anthropologists and of their students. The junior faculty members express frustration, however, about what they characterize as the unwillingness of the senior faculty to engage in deliberations about how to make such changes. Senior faculty members are characterized as often resistant to change because they wish to enforce a generational disparity in status, privilege and decision-making power.

Examples of the issues in dispute often remained rather diffuse but in one area, attitudes toward the CSUS Archaeological Research Center (ARC), emerged in sharp relief. Problems confronting the anthropology program are certainly much broader than perceptions of the ARC, but these viewpoints do tend to capture important elements of contention.

The ARC was created as an arm of the anthropology program several years ago to receive contracts to conduct research required by public and private environmental planners, and to involve students directly in archaeological research. The junior faculty generally disclaimed any bias against the ARC, yet one of the junior faculty members described the ARC as a “money-making enterprise that benefits the archaeologists and their students.” There is a perception on the part of some junior faculty members that ARC-affiliated archaeologists receive greater financial compensation as a result of their involvement in contract research; are assigned relatively low teaching loads, and are allowed to teach more classes related to their sub-disciplinary interests. On the other hand, junior faculty members believe that they are forced to subsidize these privileges by shouldering the heavy teaching loads required by the university’s GE (General Education) curriculum.

The structuring of the current departmental curriculum emerged as another key issue in dispute. There are discontents among the junior faculty that focus on the appropriateness of structuring the anthropology curriculum around the traditional four-fields approach. Opinion on this issue is divided, however. One type of complaint argues that a traditional four-fields approach, at least as currently implemented, is too rigid. According to this view, students are forced to take too many required classes, instead of being allowed to select offering of more personal interest. Moreover, this approach is thought to preclude implementation of a wider range of special topics classes of interest to professors. These faculty members would like a curriculum that maximizes the freedom of students to select their classes and of faculty to develop new courses. Other junior faculty members argue that they wish to keep an emphasis on the four-fields, and the holistic perspectives of the discipline that it imparts, but wish to redesign the curriculum along lines of greater relevance to the contemporary discipline. This perspective essentially argues that the four-fields approach is sound, but many of the courses that currently make up the curriculum are dated and need to be reworked to meet the needs of a changing discipline and student population.

For their part, senior faculty members insist they are not reflexively resistant to change. Many agree that the existing curriculum could be up-dated in useful ways. At the same time, senior faculty members want proposals for change that respect the legitimacy of existing departmental programs and curriculum rationales. The operations of the ARC are a case in point. Supporters of this program argue that any working conditions enjoyed by ARC-based archaeologists have been earned, and that the ARC brings an area of academic strength to the anthropology program that is popular with many students. Supporters of the ARC point out that staff archaeologists take on a 12-month responsibility for administering research contracts, which they work to obtain from a highly competitive off-campus funding environment, while other faculty members usually work for 9 months; that ARC-affiliated archaeologists must conduct off-campus excavations and other time-consuming tasks, as well as teach; that funds generated by the ARC are used to acquire lab and field equipment that would otherwise be unavailable; and that the ARC provides invaluable hands-on training for students seeking careers in the field applied archaeology.

In general, senior faculty members express a strong commitment to the traditional four-fields, voicing concerns about liberalizing the curriculum in ways that effectively would allow students to design their own majors. These faculty members argue that before the department can consider curriculum revision, it must first agree to a coherent new vision of the department's goals and how these goals can be realistically and fairly implemented.

The forces responsible for conflict in the CSUS anthropology program are complex and by no means express themselves purely in generational or sub-disciplinary differences. It is important to point out that representatives of all of the sub-disciplines have taken up positions on both sides of the disputes described above. This seems to suggest that disputes are not inherently rooted in the sub-disciplines, but rather about two broad concerns that cross-cut the sub-disciplines, which may be summarized as follows:

Faculty equity- Again, several junior faculty members perceive a senior faculty intent on maintaining its privileges through enforcement of a departmental *status quo*. According to this view, senior faculty members are blocking curriculum change, protect the ARC, which has gained better working conditions than the rest of the faculty, and generally refuse to engage in productive discussions. Senior faculty members disclaim any interest in monopolizing power, but insist that change has to recognize the legitimacy of their curriculum interests, and that any advantages gained through operation of the ARC have been legitimately achieved and are the result of the important academic contributions of the ARC. Senior faculty members perceive that junior faculty members are not willing to engage in productive discussions about change.

This axis of conflict centers, then, on questions of equity; equity as it relates to the perceived fairness of teaching loads, and fairness in structuring departmental arrangements, including the structure and content of the curriculum.

Visions of the Anthropological Future- A second axis of conflict centers on how the anthropology program ought to respond to new challenges. Virtually everyone agrees that anthropology is facing new challenges in the university environment, the community and the world, but opinion is divided about whether change can or should be met with responses based on the traditional four-fields approach. In the area of departmental curriculum, these differences tend to sort themselves out along two lines: (a) Maintain a traditional commitment to teaching the four fields, recognizing that faculty expertise and support of sub-disciplinary programs such as the ARC also require more specialized classes; (b) de-emphasize the four fields approach by developing new classes that are more relevant to the contemporary world, allowing students more freedom to choose among these offerings.

Anthropology in Crisis

While the circumstances described above may be the proximate causes of conflict in the CSUS anthropology program, it should also be understood that many departments of anthropology across the United States and other world regions are having similar problems. These problems, in some instances, have become severe enough to force major structural changes in anthropology programs. Understanding these broader forces provides essential perspective on the problems of the CSUS Anthropology Department, offering insights into the possible causes of conflict, as well as possible strategies for conflict resolution.

Academic disciplines are fond of saying that they are in “crisis,” and anthropology is no exception. Generations of anthropologists have debated one kind of disciplinary “crisis” of another. Widespread evidence suggests, however, that the current situation is not “crisis as usual,” but rather one in which anthropology is really in trouble this time.

Consider that anthropology entered the 20th Century with a distinctive new identity and mission: The investigation of Culture. This mission was articulated through the

discipline's four fields. Archaeologists supported this vision in their study of ancient cultures. Physical anthropologists studied human evolution and the contribution of biological factors to the development of culture. Linguists recorded disappearing native languages, but also demonstrated how language played a critical role in shaping cognition and culture. Cultural anthropologists, who were the acknowledged intellectual leaders of the field, and who tended to outnumber the practitioners of each of the other sub-disciplines, were seen everywhere as authoritative interpreters of Culture, particularly as revealed by their efforts to contrast non-western groups with Euro-American society. Students and the public responded enthusiastically. Anthropological icons, of diverse theoretical stripes, including Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead and Marvin Harris, wrote successful books not only for their students and colleagues but for wide popular audiences. Within the discipline, and despite any differences of sub-disciplinary objectives, there was a powerful, shared commitment to the concept of the four fields; holding that all of the sub-disciplines were united in revealing important things about cultural variation across time and space. This feeling was reinforced by a significant sharing of ideas and data across the sub-disciplines.

This earlier era no longer exists. Anthropology today is a quite different discipline than its practitioners experienced during the first five or six decades of the 20th Century. The field has been transformed in ways that can be described, with little exaggeration, as seismic in their scope:

Thirty or forty years ago, a college student interested in ethnicity or cultural studies would have been sent to a department of anthropology. Since the 1970s, ethnic and cultural studies departments and programs have proliferated on campuses everywhere. A spirit of multi-culturalism now pervades many academic disciplines, including the arts and humanities. Gender studies, pioneered by anthropologists, are now housed in their own departments or incorporated into a diverse range of other programs. Ideas about education pioneered by anthropologists are now peddled by greatly expanded schools of education. The "primitive societies" once studied by anthropologists have disappeared or have been transformed in ways that make them increasingly less like the societies that existed in the era before European contact. During the 20th Century, a large segment of cultural anthropology dedicated itself to a Marxist vision of social change, but capitalism emerged as the dominant economic influence in the world. While ethnographic methods were sufficient to define anthropological scholarship during the first half of the 20th century, the agencies that pay for social research decided, for the most part, that they require more quantitative and replicable research methodologies found in economics and other social science fields.

Arguably, other sub-disciplines have gained from change. The pace and scope of human fossil discoveries in Africa and elsewhere began to accelerate in the 1950s and 1960s, making the topic of human evolution a staple of television shows, museum exhibits and popular books; a trend which continues unabated. Forensic anthropology has recently become a successful franchise among the creators of movies and television shows. These trends have boosted physical anthropology to relatively high levels of visibility and funding.

None of the sub-disciplines have been transformed more dramatically, perhaps, than archaeology. The passage of state and federal environmental laws during the 1960s and 1970s included archaeological studies in the environmental planning process at every level. This has resulted in the birth of modern applied archaeology, which has grown into the largest segment of applied anthropology. There is now a substantial job market for students trained to do this kind of work. Despite the demand for applied archaeologists by public and private agencies, the training of these archaeologists rests firmly in academia. Supplying this demand is one aspect of the ARC program at CSUS. At the same time, archaeology continues to receive interest in its traditional subject matter. Once again, archaeological topics are a staple of television shows and movies.

Linguistic anthropologists deploy a set of analytical methods and theories that find support from linguists affiliated with many disciplines. Although it may be fair to say that linguistic anthropology has always attracted a comparatively small but dedicated group of students, there are signs that this sub-discipline, too, is being altered by recent trends. In some departments, linguistic anthropologists have created applied programs, which are designed to help teachers, business people and others to deal more effectively with the culturally and linguistically diverse populations that we now find in our communities.

Of the trends outlined above, one of the most far reaching is the fact that anthropologists have lost control of the concept of Culture, and of their role as interpreters of non-European and non-industrial societies to Euro-American audiences. This turn of fortune leaves anthropology struggling to define itself and its objectives; struggling to find a shared mission for its sub-disciplines. This identity crisis raises questions about how the four fields can or should articulate in the contemporary discipline. In a broader but no less profound sense, it raises questions about how anthropology can compete in modern universities, where students now have access to many different kinds of cultural studies. While all anthropologists are affected, these challenges are arguably most acute in the area of cultural anthropology, where this sub-discipline confronts perhaps the most direct competition from competing cultural studies.

This challenge seems clearly reflected the 2004-05 self study report of the CSUS Anthropology Department, which includes the objectives of socio-cultural sub-discipline (pages 17-20). This section of the report contains two “perceptions” of the future of socio-cultural anthropology at CSUS. If the reader will permit brief references, one of these perceptions argues that:

“Disorder has affected the discipline itself through fragmenting theories, interest groups, and points of view. The lack of ideological and theoretical coherence does result in significant tension, but such pluralism reflects the world in which cultural anthropologists live, are trained, and must work. What we can try to do for our students is to make the roots of such diversity, even when it is contentious, clear, by offering them a broad education in the sub-discipline itself and its theories, as well as in the enormous diversity of human cultural experience.” (page 17, 2004-05 Self-Study)

A second perspective offers this characterization of socio-cultural sub-discipline at CSUS:

“The structure of our cultural program like in the case of the majority among other institutions is based on a Cold War informed understanding of the world. This historical context and conditions that we live in are radically different...Many more curricular changes have to be accomplished to render the cultural anthropology program in our department effective and responsive to changes.” (page 20, 2004-05 Self-Study)

These two perspectives agree that many changes have overtaken anthropology and its place in academia during the last few decades, but appear to prescribe different response strategies. The first perspective seems to suggest that students can deal with change best if they continue to be trained broadly in the field’s historical mix of theories and methods, ranging from empirical evaluation of materialist theories to more interpretive stances based in ethnographic methods. The second perspective seems to argue that new strategies are required in the post-Cold War era, centering on an “implicitly comparative investigation of the manner in which ideas such as power, progress, freedom, and development, are articulated in multiple ways in peoples’ quotidian existence and how they respond” (Self-Study, page 19).

The 20th century, then, witnessed radical changes in the field of anthropology, including the discipline’s ability to project a distinctive subject matter; and the ability of the sub-disciplines to attract various kinds of support resources. Overlapping these changes is a highly variable pattern of student demand for anthropology across time. The prestigious Wenner-Gren Foundation recently released a multi-decadal study of Anthropology (Doyle 2004; also available on the Web). Data in this report show that, in recent decades, the number of anthropology majors in the United States peaked in 1974 and then steadily declined until about 1989, when the field began slowly to grow again, as it is today.

According to the Wenner-Gren study, one of the most important factors behind the selection of a major in the social sciences (where anthropology generally must compete; e.g., with psychology and sociology) is student perception of career tracks associated with a particular major. Currently, it appears that anthropology’s social science competitors project a range of career tracks, academic and particularly applied, more successfully than does anthropology. Some departments of anthropology have responded to this challenge by gearing up to train applied researchers. This approach has met with varying but promising degrees of success to date. Archaeologists have perhaps been able to implement this strategy with the greatest success, owing to the fact that archaeological research is in comparatively high demand as a result of public laws. Physical anthropologists are able to train students for jobs related to bio-medical fields and forensic anthropology. Linguists are preparing students to work in multi-cultural educational institutions, as well as other settings. Cultural anthropologists appear to remain more ambivalent about whether applied research is a desirable direction for their

sub-discipline, although some cultural anthropologists enthusiastically embrace this possibility.

The greatest challenge facing anthropology programs everywhere is how to manage constructively the extraordinary changes that have overtaken the discipline in the last three decades or so. In order to meet these challenges successfully, one might argue that anthropology needs unprecedented levels of cooperation among its practitioners. Unfortunately, internecine conflicts sometimes stand in the way of such collaboration.

Wages of War

Not surprisingly, the trends described above have created significant tensions within anthropology. Some of the most serious of these tensions appear to arise from the diverse ways in which the sub-disciplines have responded to change. The fields of physical anthropology and archaeology, for example, have always viewed themselves as having a fundamentally scientific foundation. Archaeology has always had important humanistic elements, and some of its practitioners have taken up the non-science conceptual approaches of some branches of cultural anthropology but, by and large, American archaeologists remain firmly committed to science.

While some cultural anthropologists are committed to a scientific approach, many others have chosen to work within intellectual frameworks that defy simple characterization, but clearly are not based on scientific rationales or other approaches that claim a foundation in theory-testing methodologies or a search for objective knowledge. While some describe the main foundations of contemporary cultural anthropology under the rubric of “post-modernism,” a term that some reject as too simplistic and far from universally accepted, many cultural anthropologists have turned to the rationales described on page 19 of the departmental Self-Study Report (2004-05). These rationales, as we saw above, are a matter of debate among cultural anthropologists. At the moment at least, cultural anthropology does not appear to possess a consensus about what its intellectual foundations ought to be or whether it is possible or desirable to arrive at such a consensus. Some cultural anthropologists feel that their sub-discipline’s best option is to work with a variety of approaches, even if these are potentially in conflict.

In some cases, conflict is not merely potential but actual. Some of the most provocative approaches to contemporary cultural anthropology-- let’s refer to them as “interpretive” in the hope of selecting a neutral descriptive term-- attack the validity of science or other forms of rationalist thinking. In its most aggressive form, this approach claims that science is not simply dubious on intellectual grounds, rather is complicit in facilitating racism, sexism, genocide, economic exploitation and a long list of other ills. Science is denounced by some as an egregious form of ethnocentrism that makes it possible for women, minorities, the poor and people of alternative sexual orientation to be controlled and exploited by powerful elites. Less aggressively, some assert that objectivity is simply impossible in the study of cultural behavior, suggesting that

anthropologists and their students would do well to analyze how individuals conceptualize their place in a web of social and economic conditions, particularly as regards struggles for social power and identity. Significantly, however, nearly all of these approaches have strong moral overtones.

The above outlooks, widely observed and discussed in academic literature and informally among anthropologists, have brought the discipline of anthropology to what many regard as a crisis state. While the discipline has always contained some degree of sparring between proponents of divergent intellectual views, and while the field has always concerned itself with issues of social justice, anthropologists generally stopped short of denouncing their colleagues as immoral on account of their intellectual stances. This barrier has now been breached, and some wonder if the consequences doom any hope of ever returning to the “good old days,” when anthropologists shared a commitment to the holistic perspective of the traditional four-fields. What was once restrained to intellectual debate now has a tendency to be transformed into a moral confrontation. The consequences are as unfortunate as they are predictable. Reacting to changes that the intellectual basis of their work is an illusion and indifferent to issues of social justice, if not actually culpable in supporting injustice, scientific anthropologists may tend to see themselves as having been set up by crusading moralists; activists who have abandoned serious intellectual standards in order to pursue irresponsible and self-aggrandizing social or political agendas.

With these perceptions afoot, rightly or wrongly conceived, it appears that many anthropology programs have become explosions waiting to happen.

How serious is this problem? Understandably, many departments of anthropology are reluctant to expose their internal conflicts to public view, making it difficult to gather information on the pervasiveness of academic discord. On the other hand, there are certainly signs that some anthropology departments have reached the point of meltdown over the confrontation described above. Where the “buzz” of private communications among anthropologists is frequently filled these days with accounts of faculty conflict, more objective evidence suggests that intra-disciplinary ideological warfare is in fact reshaping some anthropology departments. In some cases, conflict resolution has required the dissolution of existing departments or programs and recreating new ones along lines that partition the combatants.

In 1998, for example, Stanford University split its anthropology program into two completely new departments: The Department of Anthropological Sciences (DAS) and the Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology (DCSA). The former defines its vision as one that is, “united by a common interest in the interrelations of biology, culture, environment and language, and encourages a traditional four field-approach.” (DAS Webpage). The Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology, “addresses a wide range of issues in the comparative study of society and culture. These include issues of race, class, national origin, gender, sexual orientation and religion as they are shaped by the experiences of education, history, and migration through which people in

past and contemporary societies have defined themselves in relation to others.” (DCSA Webpage).

Anthropology at the University of California, Davis separated its program into two distinct tracks: Sociocultural anthropology and evolutionary anthropology. This approach was less radical than Stanford, in the sense that it merely partitioned the Department of Anthropology into two new wings, rather than construct two new, autonomous departments. Even so, the divergence of these tracks along scientific and interpretivist lines is hinted at by the following mission statements, posted on their respective Websites:

Sociocultural- “Sociocultural anthropologists interpret the content of particular cultures, explain variation among cultures, and study processes of cultural change and social transformation. Davis sociocultural anthropologists conduct research on most areas of the world, focusing on such topics as: human ecology; gender relations; culture and ideology; demography and family systems; race, class, and gender inequity; resistance movements; colonialism, neocolonialism, and development; cultural politics in the West.”

Evolutionary- “What unites the Evolutionary Wing of the Department of Anthropology is the application of science to understanding the behavior, ecology, and evolution of humans and non-human primates, as individuals and as societies. The many useful approaches to these topics bring together archaeology, human cultural and behavioral ecology, molecular anthropology, paleoanthropology, biogeography, conservation biology, and the socio-ecology of primates.”

To date, one of the more radical reformations of a department of anthropology has occurred at Arizona State University. On November 8, 2005 ASU’s Department of Anthropology was dissolved, replaced by the new School of Human Evolution and Social Change. Which this program incorporates the elements of the old Anthropology Department, it has taken on an explicitly interdisciplinary focus that make no recognition of traditional four fields. Intentional or not, this new program combines the work of anthropologists with colleagues from other fields, such as economics, sociology and the biological sciences, in ways that perhaps are less susceptible to clashes over anthropological world views.

What lessons can we draw from these developments? One might conclude that the Stanford and UCD cases illustrate the profitability of conflict, since the scientific and interpretivist branches of anthropology in those institutions appear perhaps to have been rewarded with their own, autonomous programs. While this may be true, it seems risky to assume that conflict can produce similar results everywhere. The “wages of moral war” may be quite different in other kinds of institutional settings. It seems highly unlikely, if history is a guide, that comprehensive universities such as the CSU campuses will entertain breaking anthropology programs into new departments or autonomous new programs. The available funding and the constraints of the campuses’ distinctive teaching roles likely are not compatible with such an approach. Failure to develop a

cooperative *modus vivendi* within existing anthropology departments may have unfortunate outcomes. Persistent turmoil may be met with a reluctance to hire new faculty members, a policy of not replacing retiring faculty, and withdrawal of discretionary resources such as funding for equipment, use of classroom spaces, and so forth. The result over the long-term is the collapse of disciplinary autonomy. Comprehensive universities are being challenged to do more with less, leaving administrators with little incentive to invest limited resources in dysfunctional programs. Dynamics of this kind have happened in recent academic history. Most notably, perhaps, geography programs in the United States, confronted with some of the same problems now apparently endemic to anthropology, suffered drastic reductions in size or disappeared altogether between the 1970s and 1990s.

In contrast to the dismal scenarios above, anthropologists have much to gain from cooperation. At this juncture in the discipline's development, internecine warfare, whatever its rationalizations, is a costly distraction from the urgent task of re-tooling for the future.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the CSUS Anthropology program is described in Table 1.C.3 of the department's Self-Study of 2004-2005 document (pages 25-26). The review found that both faculty and students identified issues related to this curriculum that warrant attention. The concerns of these two groups differ in significant ways, however. Faculty concerns tend to center on the structure of the existing curriculum, while students concerns focus primary on the implementation of the curriculum.

Faculty Concerns

The structure of the department's curriculum has served anthropology programs well for decades, and in many ways continues to do so. In sections A. and B. of Table 1.C.3, for example, we can see courses dedicated to teaching the traditional four fields. On the other hand, the courses in sections C. and D., breadth requirements and distributed electives, respectively, broaden students' knowledge and give students an opportunity to pursue topics of more personal interest. Section E., undistributed electives, further enriches the curriculum and allows faculty to institute courses of personal academic interest.

Any conclusion about the suitability of this curriculum depends, of course, on what it is expected to do. On this account, several contending points appear to occupy faculty thinking:

- **Support for the four fields.** If one believes that the four fields approach deserves priority, then large parts of the existing curriculum deserve continuing support.
- **Support for existing programs.** Courses have been devised in some cases to support particular academic programs. An example of this would be the archaeology

courses in section D., which clearly are designed to support the involvement of students and faculty in local and western North American archaeology.

- Support for the university's GE mission. In part, the courses offered by the department must be designed to be accessible by non-majors in order to support the university's general education curriculum. To some extent, this involves designing these courses in ways that are calculated to attract wide student interest.

- Keeping up with the times. Appropriately, members of the junior faculty expect, sooner or later, to institute new courses or curricular emphasizes more in line with current trends in the field. While senior faculty members do not necessarily resist such change, it is expected that anthropology programs will be revitalized by curriculum change instituted by in-coming faculty cohorts.

- Growing the major. Faculty opinions vary about the extent to which anthropology programs should be expected to attract larger numbers of majors. Some faculty feel pressured to meet the needs of their current students, arguing that it would be better to aim for high-quality training rather than numbers. On the hand, some faculty members suggest that anthropology should attempt to attract more majors because growth offers the best chance of obtaining the resources necessary to building higher quality programs. Opinions about support for the department's graduate program are couched in much the same arguments, although everyone recognizes that graduate programs require large investments of faculty time and of support resources that often are not provided by the university.

The fundamental problem created by such complex, inter-connected and sometimes competing interests is, of course, that meeting some of these demands necessarily means assigning lower priority to others. Despite these trade-offs, the faculty must craft a consensus about curriculum priorities. Two issues seem particularly crucial to such deliberations:

- Basic curriculum objectives. The faculty needs to arrive at a consensus about whether it wishes to maintain a traditional four fields approach and if so, to what extent this goal should inform the curriculum. Answering this question is basic to curriculum design. A "yes" answer to this question implies, practically, a relatively structured curriculum that ultimately reduces the number of special topics classes that can be offered, and directs student learning along relatively well defined paths. A "no" answer opens up several possibilities. For example, the department could adopt new thematic approaches to the curriculum that that are not synonymous with the four fields (the "Arizona State approach" mentioned above). Alternatively, as some departments appear to be doing elsewhere, sub-disciplinary "tracks" could be devised that offer more a chance for students to choose a more defined path in the discipline, pay little or no attention to four-fields distinctions (the Stanford approach). As difficult as these decisions may be, it appears that current conflicts in the department cannot be resolved without tackling them.

- **Growing the major.** Despite the fact that disciplines such as history, psychology, sociology, ethnic studies, cultural studies and others are attracting students who might otherwise be anthropology majors, some believe that anthropology can essentially maintain a stable niche in academia, despite such competition. Such a perception obscures realities that may well work against the future of the discipline. Critically, in the CSU system small departments such as anthropology earn their keep by contributing relatively large FTES figures to the GE curriculum. Some might argue that such classes are good for recruiting majors. It is not clear, however, that such recruitment is effective enough to off-set the efforts expended in teaching other departments' majors. The time and energy committed to such efforts is not available for revamping the anthropology major in ways that might attract more students. Even if anthropology is gradually growing, it may not be growing fast enough to keep valuable resources, such as additional faculty, from being allocated to other departments. Numbers are not the whole picture, of course. Deans and other administrators make resource allocation decisions based on issues of quality and the distinctiveness of academic missions. Just the same, the most effective way for any anthropology program to take control of its own future is probably to attract more majors.

Applied anthropology, among departments that have made commitments to growth, is a favored direction of growth. Such programs, in addition to traditional academic training, are devising classes that better market the sub-disciplines' non-academic career applications. Archaeology, for example, is emphasizing careers in cultural resources management. Physical anthropology is, for instance, preparing students for work in the bio-medical industry and forensic anthropology. Cultural anthropology and linguistics are tracking students toward work in health care, educational and business settings. These same emphases form a logical strategy for developing the anthropology graduate program. A number of departments across the country have taken steps in this direction, but the applied anthropology programs at the California State University, Long Beach are particularly worth study, in the reviewer's opinion. The CSULB department has developed an unusually wide and dynamic range of applied programs, spanning the four fields. While there will always be a role for graduate and undergraduate education that prepares students for careers as academics, including preparation of students for Ph.D. programs, applied anthropology may be a useful area to consider in curriculum change and future faculty hires.

Thematic or topical rationales for anthropology allow any region of world, including the Sacramento area, to be investigated, while perhaps articulating to potential majors more meaningful or attractive understandings of what anthropology is about. The current curriculum is based on a regional rubric that includes the Sacramento region and the Pacific Rim. This is one possible rationale for shaping the program but if the department chooses to move toward significant curriculum change, this sort regionalism may be too constrained as an organizational principle.

Student Concerns

CSUS Anthropology majors articulated two concerns about the implementation of the curriculum: Unpredictable class scheduling and confusion regarding academic advising. Undergraduate and graduate students were afforded an opportunity to meet with the reviewer. A total of 17 students (four graduate and 13 undergraduate) were interviewed. In the reviewer's experience, this was an impressive turnout, representing about ten percent of the department's undergraduate majors. Not only were most of these students eager to offer comments, much of what they had to say followed consistent themes:

Scheduling of classes- Many students expressed frustration that classes required by the anthropology major do not seem to be scheduled in any predictable fashion from semester to semester, making it difficult for students to plan their own schedules and to make informed choices of electives. Moreover, some students complained that required classes are sometimes scheduled at the same time, once again making it difficult to progress through sequence of required classes in a timely way.

Academic advising- Many students expressed frustration with academic advising in the department. These students claimed that it is not clear which faculty members they should approach for advising. Several students claimed they were given mistaken information about the curricular requirements that applied to their cases when they did meet with advisers.

The reviewer's experience as a professor, extending over more than three decades, is that some students are always unhappy with class scheduling and advising simply because these involve factors that cannot make everybody happy. Bearing this in mind, the reviewer makes no conclusions about the extent to which the students' comments are objectively true. It seems clear, however, that the department has at least a significant problem of student perception, given the number and vehemence student comments. This is an area that deserves attention in the interest of maintaining a strong anthropology major.

PROGRAM SUPPORT

Generally, the operations of the anthropology program appear to enjoy good support resources. Notable strengths in this area include the Anthropology Museum, the ARC facilities and "smart" classrooms. The Anthropology Museum is an attractive facility that allows themes and programs of anthropological interest to reach wide campus audience. The ARC facility provides support for relatively equipment-intensive archaeological field and lab research, but also affords employment to students who which to participate in contract funded research and gain valuable professional experience. As many faculty members are moving to modern, computerized instruction techniques, the CSUS anthropology program appears to have good access to classrooms equipped for this purpose. Based on the review, however, three additional support areas deserve attention:

CSUS archaeological curation facility houses a substantial number of artifact collections and approximately 1000 human skeletons. The artifact collections are an important academic resource, as faculty and student researchers require these collections to advance their work. Archaeology is an area of major academic strength in the CSUS anthropology program, and these collections are essential to the health of this program. The artifact and skeletal collections entail formal responsibilities on the part of the university. Particularly with regard to artifacts collected in recent decades, the university, in exchange for accepting research grants and contracts, agrees to conserve these collections in a reasonable manner, including security against theft and deterioration due to environmental hazards. In an effort to create more storage space for artifact collections, the university installed raised steel scaffolding. Unfortunately, however, this arrangement affords poor access to the collections. Attention should be given to improving the security of the facility and accessing the collections. As a guide, the department should consider bringing this facility up to the standards set forth in federal guidelines for archaeological curation facilities.

Human skeletons, which were collected over many decades from archaeological excavations, deserve priority attention. In 1990, the U.S. Congress passed the Native Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), charging all public institutions holding Native American skeletons and related artifacts with the obligation to: (a) Inventory the remains with deliberate speed, (b) transmit the inventory to the United States Park Service for public dissemination by 1994, (c) consult with Native American communities who may have cultural links to the remains, and (d) prepare mechanisms for repatriating remains to groups deemed eligible to receive them. The State of California has imposed similar requirements under state law. It appears that these mandates have been essentially completed at CSUS except, apparently, for consultation with Indian communities in the region, owing to a lack of funds for this process. It should be borne in mind that failure to comply with NAGPRA can result, by law, in federal funds of all kinds being withheld from an institution not in compliance. At the same time, problems with the NAGPRA process can, and in some institutions have, become the focal point of conflicts with Native American communities; conflicts which do not cast a favorable light on academic institutions.

A recent Native American NAGPRA inquiry about the skeletal collections apparently has resulted in difficulty finding the skeletal materials and/or associated artifacts in question. This problem appears to be symptomatic of the general difficulty of accessing the facility's collections, illustrating that problems with the general condition of the facility cannot be separated from NAGPRA concerns. This situation requires immediate attention.

Departmental office facilities- The departmental office is a vital resource for program success. Not only does the office support instructional operations, it represents a vital point of contact between students and the anthropology program. An interview with the departmental support staff resulted in suggestions for reconfiguring the spaces currently available to the department in ways that will create a more efficient work flow and better handle student inquires. These suggestions merit consideration.

Part-time faculty- Four part-time faculty members were interviewed. The anthropology program has been fortunate in attracting enthusiastic and effective part-time instructors. Some of these instructors have made vital contributions to the program for many years, if not decades. However, according to part-time instructors and full-time faculty members, CSUS has fallen behind local community colleges in pay rates for scales for part-timers. This situation is making it increasingly difficult to attract sufficient numbers of well-qualified applicants to the pool of part-time instructors. While it is not clear how much flexibility the department or the university has in meeting this challenge, this problem may increasingly hamper the efforts of the department to maintain its curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the issues outlined above:

Faculty Conflict

It is recommended that top priority be given to resolving the faculty conflicts described earlier. As other challenges facing the department are unlikely to be solved in the absence of faculty cooperation, this objective takes logical priority.

This effort, in order to be effective, should involve all members of the full-time faculty and the support of the CSUS administration. The most effective way to attain this objective, in the reviewer's opinion, is to initiate discussions among the whole faculty, facilitated by a mediator. The administration can assist by retaining a mediator who is a neutral party, knowledgeable about the issues under discussion and an effective facilitator. These discussions should be structured by an agenda explicitly aimed at identifying areas of faculty agreement and cooperation, not merely airing grievances:

Participation in these discussions should be viewed as part of the professional responsibility of each faculty member to contribute positively to the governance and academic affairs of the department. The most important objective here is to define a style of governance that a majority of faculty members are willing to use as a basis for departmental decision-making.

Following the stress points identified earlier in this review, discussions might usefully seek to identify areas of agreement about how anthropologists of all sub-disciplines can work toward common goals in teaching anthropology students, and about how agreements can be reached about the equity of rewards that stem from faculty work.

Administrators must play a key role in this process. The Dean's office should make it clear what investments the university is willing to make in helping the Anthropology Department to forge more cooperative and productive anthropology program.

Curriculum

Curriculum revision, as noted earlier, is a key issue in contention. It is recommended that the faculty seek to resolve the issues highlighted in the section on Curriculum. One hopes that opening more effective lines of communication among the faculty, and a shared commitment to departmental decision-making, will allow these issues to be discussed productively, resulting in strategies that enjoy majority faculty support.

If a decision is taken to seek a larger number of majors, attention should be given to curricular strategies that will allow anthropology to compete favorably in the academic market place. Faculty hiring and course development in areas of applied anthropology is a robust trend among departments in search of disciplinary growth. This approach should be considered by the CSUS Anthropology Department. Applied anthropology should be considered as a possible new emphasis in the anthropology graduate program at CSUS.

It is recommended that the CSUS Anthropology faculty revisit the regional rubrics under which the program currently operates. While it is certainly desirable for the department's programs to engage the local community, there appears to be a growing sense among faculty members that thematic or topical rationales may better serve to organize the efforts of the anthropology program.

Course scheduling and student advising emerged as significant areas of student concern about the curriculum. The cycling of required majors courses should be given careful attention, seeking to set class schedules as far in advance as possible, and in ways that allow majors to matriculate in a timely fashion. When such schedules are identified, it may be helpful to circulate them on a provisional basis to all faculty members for review and comment. This helps to create a sense of transparency in how schedules are devised, but it also utilizes many pairs of eyes to spot potential problems. Faculty members should also be impressed with their responsibility to support scheduling schemes that work for the greater good of the department, even if they sometimes are less than ideal from the standpoint of personal preference.

It appears that academic advising needs to be a more transparent activity vis-à-vis students. The department's Webpage may be an effective way to communicate the importance of advising, and when and from whom such advising can be obtained.

Program Support

Compliance with NAGPRA requirements also deserves high priority attention. It is recommended that the Department of Anthropology be requested to study this issue and, with deliberate speed, make recommendations for how NAGPRA compliance can be achieved. At the same time, it is recommended that strategies be identified for improving the security and accessibility of the curation facility. It should be recognized that

problems connected with NAGPRA compliance ultimately cannot be divorced from the general functioning of the curation facility.

Departmental office facilities should be examined, with the objective of improving their work flow and ability to handle student inquires.

Part-time faculty hiring and retention patterns should be examined to determine whether the department is increasingly at a disadvantage in obtaining the services of these important colleagues and, if so, what strategies might help to alleviate the problem.

References

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2004 *A Report on the Field of Anthropology in the United States*. Wenner-Gren Foundation report, also published on the Web.