

Update and Response to the Recommendations for Action
Anthropology and Behavioral Science Programs
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
October, 2008
Sharon K. Davis, Ph.D. Chair

1. Update the mission statement to focus more on diversity, cross-cultural and multicultural issues that are so well represented in the Anthropology program.

Response: We have worked successfully on growing our enrollments in our Ethnic Studies course sequence. Our Race and Ethnicity course and our Native American Experience course have especially grown steadily in terms of enrollments. We continue to integrate diversity, cross-cultural and multicultural issues into our existing courses as well.

2. Improve conditions in the Archaeology Lab so that it is an appropriate space for classroom use and collection storage.

Response: We have been somewhat successful in meeting this goal; however, more commitment and economic support by the university is needed to realize our goals entirely. The vermin and vector carcasses and droppings have been cleaned up and the area has been sprayed. Our archaeologist continues to make improvements in the lab insofar as available monies will allow. Courses in Museum Curation provide students with experience on how to create and maintain the space.

3. Remove the dedicated anthropology classroom from the scheduling pool and use it only for anthropology courses.

Response: Although it took multiple semesters to coordinate the scheduling of classes in this room, we have been successful in meeting this goal. While we feel that we must continue to be vigilant to ensure that backsliding does not occur on the part of room schedulers that could once again block our access to this room and its important collections, we have realized this goal.

4. Acquire a budget for lab equipment and supplies for a minimum of three labs with room for expansion as the criminology and anthropology lab course offerings expand.

Response: Although our CrimOnline Program has been dismantled, the enrollments in our Forensic Investigations course, which uses the lab, remain strong. Additionally, our Physical Anthropology courses, our Archaeology course with a mandatory lab, as well as our new Museum Curation course all utilize our lab. Thus, we have expanded our course offerings that utilize the lab, but lost a major source of funding by the CrimOnline Program. With the program's earnings, we were able to purchase most of the microscopes and many of the bones and skeletons now housed and used in the lab.

While administration indicated that they would fiscally support the lab, no line item in the Sociology and Anthropology budget was created for that purpose. Thus, supplies must be requested from administration. We have not been able to add to our supplies for this academic year and are concerned about microscope and supply replacement when the current equipment becomes dated and our supplies have been used up by the students.

5. Provide resources in the form of course release time for recruiting transfer students for the anthropology major from local community colleges and setting up articulation agreements for transfers.

Response: Because we have been denied a new faculty position for the past five years, denied that one of our senior adjunct faculty become a Lecturer, and have one-half of an administrative assistant, we cannot meet this goal. At least half of our full-time faculty are teaching overload classes in order to meet student demand and our department budget is tight, thus course release time is an impossibility. Additionally, the Admissions Office has not wanted faculty to be actively involved in student recruitment. Although we had an articulation agreement with a large community college nearly completed, we were told to cease and desist our efforts at increasing our own student enrollments.

6. Convert the Advising Coordinator position into a permanent staff position in order to improve the quality and accessibility of advising services.

Response: The termination of the CrimOnline Program by administration has resulted in the loss of the Advising Coordinator position.

7. Create a tracking system for gathering and organizing data on basic aspects of the program, including characteristics of students, class enrollments, etc.

Response: With only one-half of an administrative assistant and the loss of the Advising Coordinator position, we do not have the resources to accomplish this goal.

8. Consider changing the Senior Thesis requirement of an Honors-only course, for those students planning to attend graduate or professional schools.

Response: We continue to dialogue and share ideas re. this change during department meetings. We currently are considering the creation of a professionalism course in lieu of the Senior Thesis course for most students.

9. Consider creating a new course on professionalization to help seniors learn how to apply to graduate/professional schools, jobs, etc

Response: One of our senior adjunct professors who teaches senior thesis courses for us and has taught professionalism courses at another university has developed a professionalism course that we are currently reviewing and discussing. We are considering both the content and how it will interface with our current curriculum.

Because of the important role that he plays in our department and the number of courses he teaches each semester, we have repeatedly requested that he be hired as a full-time Lecturer. These requests have been denied by administration.

10. Provide more advising services to students related to graduate and professional schools (preparation for exams, information on the graduate education process).

Response: Although each faculty member tries to provide guidance in these areas on a one-on-one basis during student appointments, no systematic departmental plan has been implemented due to the lack of faculty and staff resources. Ideally, one of our honor societies or our Sociology/Anthropology/Criminology (SAC) Club, if they were active, could help with this effort. A proposed course in Professionalism, mentioned above, would include some of this material.