

Response to Reviewers
Seventh Cycle Academic Program Review
Department of Anthropology
San Francisco State University
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Responses to Reviewer Recommendations

We are gratified that our hard work in revitalizing the Department over the last five years was recognized by the external reviewers in their overview, assessment of program quality and discussion of our achievements. As we move forward, we are committed to further improving the quality of the program by implementing many of the excellent recommendations of the reviewers. Some of the recommendations were already under discussion and/or have already been implemented since the review, but the external input also includes innovative suggestions that were not part of our planning and self-study.

Recommendations from the reviewers are in italics with our detailed responses given below. A table summarizing our proposed action items and working timeline for implementation is given at the end of the written responses.

4.1 Institutional Resources

a. TENURE-LINE HIRES

Propose at least one more hire in cultural and visual anthropology to fill out tenure-line faculty roster commensurate with present and future needs. Much cultural teaching is now falling on faculty with other duties (Quesada and Lincoln in medical anthropology; to some degree Biella in visual anthropology) and on four lecturers. There is an argument for this hire to be a cultural anthropologist who is also an experienced filmmaker to enhance and sustain SFSU's long-term eminence in ethnographic photography and documentary film. Revisit and refine potential hiring priorities in archaeology (to be determined) and biological anthropology (several possible directions: a potential genetics specialist jointly with the College of Science and Engineering, a primatologist who works with the SF Zoo, or another kind of human biology specialist who could build dimensions of health and medicine shared with other subdisciplines).

In Spring 2017 we unsuccessfully applied for a visual anthropology hire. We will be revising the position request for a hire with film-maker experience and the research background to teach and pursue scholarly activities grounded in cultural anthropology that complement the research interests of our existing faculty (potentially with a focus on immigration and health). This role would be similar to that of our FTF Visual Anthropologist Peter Biella, who teaches cultural anthropology classes and contributes to the medical anthropology program through his work on HIV and alcoholism in Tanzania. We currently have a 1.0 lecturer who teaches both visual and cultural classes (three sections F17, four sections S18). Other lecturers covered an additional four sections of cultural classes and our two GVAR classes in Fall 17 and will cover two sections of cultural and the two GVAR classes in Spring 18, representing a total enrollment of 319 for Fall 17. Such a hire would also benefit the MA program. In Fall 2017, 65% (60 total) of the potential applicants (i.e., those filling out the webform expressing interest in applying to the program) sought placements in the areas of cultural or visual anthropology. Our ability to properly cultivate these students is limited by having only 3.5 faculty members who could be appropriate thesis/creative works advisors (Biella, Lincoln, Quesada, Bailey = 0.5). Given these needs, we will submit a revised T/TT position application in Spring 18.

The full sequence of our planned hire requests is:

1. Cultural visual with a focus on immigration and health – Spring 2018
2. Archaeologist with a strong commitment to public archaeology
3. Biological anthropologist with the expertise in human biology to build on the health and medicine foci of our cultural, archaeology, visual and biological programs.

The latter two hiring priorities will be further refined with complete job descriptions by Fall 18.

b. LECTURERS

Add a biological anthropology lecturer to support Wilczak and Griffin in their teaching (no such lecturers currently on staff).

We agree that a new biological anthropology lecturer should be recruited, particularly with the chair's course releases for Wilczak. Several of the biological anthropology classes she normally teaches are the first to fill (Anth 302, Anth 333) and cannot be covered with our current lecturer pool. A job announcement will be listed at the end of Spring 18 via Handshake and distributed to Bay Area Anthropology departments.

c. TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Grow the use of TAs esp in 100-level courses beyond 100 (Bio Anth), including 110 (Intro to Arch) and 130 (Intro to Vis Anth). Increase retention and enrollments in these classes through hands-on materials, projects, and supervision by embedded grad students. This will also provide graduate students with invaluable experience, a deeper integration with the life of the department, and some funding.

The college granted GA funds for a teaching assistant in Fall 17 and Spring 18. We used these funds for a TA in a section of the Anth 100 course, which the LCA has identified as having a high DFW rate (>10%). As the college is reassessing the distribution of GA funds, we expect there will be some increase in the number of TA positions available.

d. IMPROVE LABS AND EQUIPMENT

Continue with requests for equipment for wet lab (fume hood, casts, 3-D printing support); dry lab (curation-standard storage, calipers, flat-screen monitor); vis anth lab (cameras and field production gear, Zoom audio recorders, Atlas TI software, GIS); and grad student office (to be determined). Support archaeology lab inventories and digitizing of collections. Consider a lab management certificate for advanced students. Consider modest lab/materials fees for certain courses in biological, visual, and archaeology.

We have begun discussions of this year's priorities for upgrades to research and teaching lab equipment and tentatively identified the following: archaeology storage units, 3D scanning equipment upgrades, fossil and other biological anthropology casts, specialized tripods for film-making, software and hardware for ethnographic research and workstations with printers for the MA office. The list will be finalized in our first faculty meeting of the Spring 18 semester. We will pursue multiple avenues to obtain funds in the upcoming year including use of the remaining faculty hiring package budget (Reifschneider), departmental budget funds, and an application for Instructional Equipment Funding. We are also submitting an application to institute course fees in some of the methods courses (Anth 595 and 596; Anth 530/730; ANTH 531/731 and ANTH 594) as a source of funding for ongoing maintenance and replacement costs. The suggestion for a Lab Management Certificate by the reviewers is interesting but may be beyond our current resources as faculty are balancing our current UG and MA programs and scholarly research. However, we will have a discussion of this suggestion to see if we could potentially develop this or another type of certificate through creative utilization of existing resources and coursework. In the longer term, we are looking into initiating alumni campaigns where donations can be directed toward specific needs.

e. REINSTATE SWAP SHOP

This is a campus-wide issue whereby multiple departments could benefit from a renewed swap shop whereby classroom materials may be recycled and repurposed before being dumped.

Currently, items such as chairs, desks, teaching materials are all placed in dumpsters outside the parking lot structure to be towed away. Departments with limited budgets have no access to such materials. The Office of Sustainability could be a good partner for facilitating this resource.

Our department used the Swap Shop extensively to “shop” for office and lab furniture needs when it was in Burke Hall. We have not found the public surplus on the “Digital Swap Shop” useful because items from campus never seem to be listed. We will contact Fiscal Affairs and Sustainable SF State about ways to improve the situation.

4.2 Curricular Enhancements

a. NEW CLASSES (and Revision of Current Classes)

Continue to develop and refine ideas for potential new classes, especially in areas of specialization. Visual anthropology has recently overhauled and expanded their curriculum, offering now a total of eleven classes from a new 100-level introduction (which could become a GE offering) to graduate film-making courses in association with the School of Cinema. Some potential examples in other subfields are noted below. (See the reviewer report for their complete list, we have identified priorities based on that list)

In addition to adding courses we are reshaping our course offerings by elimination and revision. Four courses were discontinued in Fall 2017 because they no longer relevant to modern practice and theory or not aligned with the scholarly interests of current faculty. Others are targeted for elimination or revision on a rolling basis as new courses are developed.

Visual Anthropology has undergone extensive revisions in the last two years as it was elevated to a more equal standing with the other subfields in the new UG curriculum (Fall 2018 rollout). While existing courses will continue to be refined, new courses are not planned until a new hire is in place.

Archaeology introduced ANTH 460 Historical Archaeology in Fall 17 and will begin teaching ANTH 594 Zooarchaeology in Spring 18. In the 18-19 academic year, the archaeology program will introduce a course in Political/Public/Activist Anthropology; revise courses on Mesoamerica and Mayan Archaeology into a more theoretically based Archaeology of the Americas; and revise ANTH 356 Archaeology of California to ground it in the modern public and activist archaeological practice of the region.

Cultural Anthropology is targeting courses for elimination or revision while introducing new courses to completely break from older programs of “peoples and places” and narrow conceptions of cultural identity to complete our shift to a modern anthropology of globalization, immigration and diasporas, and transnationalism, while still maintaining the medical anthropology focus. This will also make the program more relevant to students with interests in business, technology and international relations. The Anthropology of Society, Technology and Medicine will be submitted in Spring 18. Other priority courses for development starting in Fall 18 are the Anthropology of: humanitarianism; global health; and infectious disease. Other new courses would be developed if we are successful in getting our T/TT in visual and cultural anthropology.

Biological Anthropology course offerings will not change at this time given the current make-up of the faculty. However, all courses will be reviewed with an emphasis on innovative teaching methods that translate into increasing student success while thoroughly grounding students in the theory of natural sciences. The latter is particularly important given a political climate

increasingly hostile toward the sciences. We are committed to engaging our students in current controversies surrounding evolution, climate change and species extinction, and modern health issues, e.g., vaccination, gene therapy, emerging infectious disease.

b. EXISTING COURSE ENHANCEMENTS (add GE)

Consider making ANTH 130 (Intro to visual) a GE class. Consider making Statistics a GE class to increase enrollments. This could mesh well with the School of Nursing, pre-med students, science, and social science departments that need statistics. Some anthropology UG and MA students have been able to get jobs in part due to this one statistics course due to the SPSS analytic database training it offers.

ANTH 130 Introduction to Visual Anthropology was approved for GE as a LD-D1 in Fall 2017. The ANTH 652 course cannot be submitted as a GE course in quantitative reasoning as suggested by the reviewers because it is not lower division. Although the course does cover basic statistical methods it also serves to introduce graduate students to the SPSS software that many need to complete their theses; therefore, changing ANTH 652 to an LD course is not possible. Additionally, it is structured to teach research project design to both the UD-UG and MA students taking the course, which is more advanced than most LD-UG students would be prepared to take on. Alternatively, the course could be cross-listed with other departments to increase enrollments. In the past students from linguistics, history and nursing have taken the course and enrollments should benefit from increased visibility.

c. FIELD PROJECTS (and CSL)

Develop and support Presidio project in archaeology; possible eventual field school. Build upon Community Service Learning with Community Based Organizations in the Bay Area and nationally (for example, the Dolores Street Community Services and Day Labor Program). Continue rich studies of local communities in visual anthropology.

As mentioned by the reviewers, we currently have a number of courses that engage students in field projects in the Bay Area, i.e., ANTH 333, 595, 596, 557, 651 and our newest faculty member's archaeological work (Reifschneider) at the Presidio will incorporate aspects of that project into her classes. Whether it can be developed into a separate field school will depend on many factors, including external ones, but there will be on-going discussions to assess the feasibility of such a plan.

Peter Biella has developed Community Service Learning opportunities in ANTH 595 and 596 and he will be asked to advise the department on his experience so we can add CSL components in other courses (e.g., ANTH 555, 651, 557).

d. RECRUITING OF STUDENTS

Reach out to lower-division students in other majors (ex. pre-nursing, business) through GE 100-level classes which explicitly invite students to pursue their interests in anthropology instead. This department offers special appeal and preparation for those interested in health care careers.

In Fall 17 we developed a slide presentation for an advising and information open house that links skills learned in anthropology to careers in medicine, public health, business, and other fields of study. It will be used in the intro-level courses, and it will also be converted to materials for the Department web site and handouts.

e. ASSESSMENT

Continue surveys, conversation, and assessment with undergraduate program majors on their perspectives on their progress through the program and on relevant training for post-BA opportunities.

We will continue our detailed assessments program that focuses on developing writing skills and the methods course skills training. We will also initiate conversations with relevant local employers to discuss the training and skills they are looking for when hiring.

4.3 Leveraging Student Success

a. ADVISING

Focus as proposed in coming year on undergraduate advising, with faculty meetings discussing priorities. Articulate pathways to success not only in academic fields but also in policy, law, health professions, civil service, private enterprise, museums and archives, media and film, health care, and the biotechnology industry. Outline advising plans that clarify flexible pathways for students through the major. Give special attention to student retention and to quick progress through program to graduation.

Consider a more formal structure for a peer advising program to give responsibility to upper-division students, possibly in conjunction with a revived undergraduate major association, to augment the work of the undergraduate coordinator. Match incoming students with capable upper-division majors who could receive brief training and be certified as peer advisors. They could speak to course choice and enrollment, degree planning, and integration of overseas study or field schools.

As mentioned above, we are beginning to implement programs to more effectively assist students in career planning after graduation. In Fall 2017 we prepared a slide presentation to begin building formal career advising and accompanying materials will be developed guiding student in elective choices appropriate to their career pathway. Student advising specifically aimed at greater retention is discussed in more detail below under "Retention." Interim Provost Summit has also increased staff and resources in the Career Services Office, and we look forward to partnering with them as another resource for our students.

The peer advising program suggested by reviewers is an interesting idea that will be up for discussion. To be successful it would be best to include incentives for participation and to seek student input on its goals. To invest students in such a program, we will look to involve them in its development, perhaps through the UG Student Association, which needs to be revived (we do have an active MA Student Association). The peer advisors would also need incentives for their time, potentially enrolling in a one-unit course covering the training, development of materials, and time spent advising other students.

b. RETENTION

Continue to assess and formulate further means of noting, helping, and working with struggling students promptly during each term, esp in 100-level classes. Possibly build in a routine notification and referral system at 3 to 6 weeks into each term that links students having difficulties with the Student Learning Center and other support services. Reach out to students who initially enter in Nursing or Business to consider Anthropology pathways for eventual related careers.

Our first MA student graduate assistant was assigned to one of the Anth 100 sections, which has been identified by the college as having a high DFW rate (>10%). The impact on student success will be assessed. The instructor is also implementing a more proactive system in the Spring by having the TA contact students who are doing poorly early in the semester to set up a meeting (in Fall all TA sessions were advertised as “open”, voluntary attendance). Impacts on student outcomes will be compared to the Fall and similar strategies will be implemented in other introductory courses with any additional TAs funding.

The GVAR instructors have a regular system for referring students to LAC and CARP for writing help, but will initiate a procedure for doing the same throughout a student’s academic career. We are aware of the University statistics for first-time Freshman who never successfully complete their degree, which show 43% leave in the first two semesters and 67% leave by the end of the second year ([2013 AIR report](#), pg 4). We will be working on a system to identify those students struggling in the first and second semester, before they are on academic probation, and implement intervention strategies to provide support through advising and/or other referrals as needed.

Student retention is also impacted by the life challenges students face. The negative correlations between food and housing insecurity and 'student success' are documented in the literature (e.g., <https://nche.ed.gov/downloads/briefs/he-success.pdf>; <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1515/jcc-2014-0031>). Several of our classes have focused on homelessness and food insecurity and seek not only to raise awareness at a university level but also give courage to students in the class who are - or have friends who are - suffering, and to create ideas that will help improve matters in the future.

As detailed in 4.2d and 4.4b, we will be implementing strategies to help attract students to the major.

c. STUDENT SUCCESS AND ALUMNI

There is already notable student success, in part as a result of faculty commitment to learning outcomes (see Appendix A). The department is prepared to leverage this to new levels by engaging with alumni and rendering visible student pathways to a range of different career fields.

In the Fall 2017, the chair reviewed the SFSU alumni advisor network to identify potential contacts, but the database does not filter or even list the alumni by major at SFSU. This is a limitation of the network for our purpose of specifically engaging former and current students from the Anthropology department. The chair also met with Robert Avalos, Senior Director of Development for LCA and our alumni contact list is being updated, which will help us in identifying potential anthropology alumni mentors. Once we obtain the updated list, we will be sending out a department newsletter to update alumni on student and faculty activities and to advertise events for alumni participation. We will be asking alumni with non-traditional career pathways to contact us if they are willing to talk to our current students about their experience in a series titled “Life after my BA in Anthropology: How the Field Contributed to my Career”. In addition to our initiatives in career counseling, these events will provide concrete examples of the diversity of career pathways available to students with an anthropology degree and strengthen alumni bond to the department.

4.4 Enhancing Networks and Visibility

a. LEVERAGE FINE ARTS LOCATION

to increase campus profile and class enrollment. Consider wayfinding or ground-level announcements of rotating exhibitions in department hallways and offices on fifth floor. Consider more public receptions for new work in inviting department space.

Our department is in a somewhat out of the way location on the fifth floor of the Fine Arts building with poor signage. A new way-finding guide design has been finalized by a working group comprised of Rozan Soleimani and chairs of departments in the Fine Arts Building. Departments have agreed to contribute funds for the prototype signs, which should be ready in Spring 18. We are also purchasing temporary sign frames for posting events in more heavily trafficked areas on campus. We are planning two public reception events for the Spring. One will be an interactive workshop/reception to involve alumni/donors in hands-on bioarchaeology research activities with Cynthia Wilczak and Mark Griffin. A similar future event will utilize artifacts from the Presidio project of Meredith Reifschneider (2018-19). Peter Biella will also host a Film Festival at the end of Spring 2018 featuring MA creative works open to alumni and the general public. In the idea phase is a series of talks coordinated with exhibits in the Global Museum (2018-2019).

We will continue to support the brown bag series of invited speakers, coordinated through the Graduate Student Association. We are currently strategizing on ways to attract more UG students to these events, which tend to attract mostly graduate students and faculty members. One of the scheduled brown bags will be given by Peter Biella on SFSU student food and housing insecurity. A brown bag in Fall 2017 presented local and national statistics concerning the problem. The second in Spring 18 will be a summary of campus-wide ethnographic research about insecure students at SFSU.

b. CROSS-LIST AND AFFILIATE

Build in further strengthened relationships with Museum Studies, Ethnic Studies, Health Education, History, Classics, Cinema, BECA (Broadcasting Electronic and Communication Arts), Sociology, and Sexuality Studies; perhaps also Biology, Pre-Nursing programs, and Health Education.

Continue working with other departments to advertise and potentially cross-list their courses, and to possibly leverage shared resources. As an example, the NAGPRA course in American Indian Studies is already cross-listed. Other possible courses could further enhance enrollments and render anthropology more visible across the campus.

The reviewer's report mentions cross-listing of the AIS 490 NAGPRA course, but we also have cross-listings with Modern Greek Studies (MGS/ANTH 319), Critical Social Thought (ANTH/CST 320, 585, 590), Cinema (ANTH/CINE 327, 595, 596), Journalism (ANTH/JOURN 328), Labor Studies (LABR/ANTH 343, 500), Sociology (SOC 420/ANTH 420), American Indian Studies (AIS/ANTH 500), Latina/o Studies (LTNS/ANTH 501), Urban Studies and Planning (ANTH/USP 555, 557), Sexuality Studies (ANTH/SXS 569), Women and Gender Studies (ANTH/WGS 590), History (HIST/ANTH 609) and Dance (DANC/ANTH 657). Nonetheless we will be cross-listing a new course from AIS on the Ancient America and will pursue cross-listing of the Anth 652 Anthropological Statistics course with other social science departments.

More importantly, we will develop information sheets that can be used to advertise to students in other departments. In Fall 18 the Anthropology chair met with Robert Collins, Chair of AIS, who had developed a pathways sheet showing how students could complete a double major in AIS and Anthropology and graduate on time. We will develop similar materials for other majors showing pathways and relevant electives for double majors or minors with anthropology. Target

programs include: Museum Studies, Classics, Latina/o Studies, Journalism, Health Sciences, Nursing, Business, Cinema and BECA.

c. ENHANCE LOCAL, BAY AREA AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Each of the sub-fields may forge new connections and leverage existing relations with local Bay Area institutions such as UCSF, CAPS (Center for AIDS Prevention Studies), RTI (Research Triangle International), Dept. of Public Health, regional archives, museum collections, and many more. Specific focus on California as a gateway to the Pacific Rim as well as to Latin America may also be useful.

This will be an on-going area of development. While already have connections with numerous agencies and institutions through faculty research, student projects and internships (e.g., SF Zoo, Day Laborer Program, University of the Pacific, Berkeley, Stanford, San Jose State University, UC San Francisco, the Presidio, California Academy of Science), in addition to adding partnerships, we can enhance existing connections in several ways. We can render the connections more visible by maintaining a data base of individual contacts and student projects and highlighting them on our website and other advertising media. Inviting more of our contacts to be guest speakers for our Brown Bag lunch series or other planned events and reciprocating with speaking engagements at their institutions also increases the visibility of these partnerships and strengthens the connections (Also see 4.4 e, PUBLIC ANTHROPOLOGY).

d. ONLINE MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION

The Department may expand its multimedia production for broader audiences and community outreach. It may continue to refine and expand offerings launched with 'Franz Boas Radio' podcasts along with faculty profiles and interviews. Other possibilities include an online publication, audiovisual portraits and blogging by students, arts/anthropology collaborations, end-of-semester receptions with rotating shows, and a department account on social media for announcements.

The use of on-line media production has been an area of discussion in the Department and needs strategic planning due to the time commitments needed to maintain an effective on-line presence. Franz Boas Radio has filmed another interview in Fall 2017 with Mythri Jegathesan from Santa Clara University on female tea plantation workers in Sri Lanka, but the time commitment involved in the film and sound editing for the final cut is considerable. We have discussed making this type of work part of a course project to expedite production. Student involvement within classes and through a revived UG student association for this and other multi-media projects is an excellent idea that would lessen the burden on faculty. Inclusion of student projects and class work in our gallery space has already been established and can be extended to other online and offline productions. The use of public receptions to elevate our presence in the community is further discussed in Public Anthropology.

e. PUBLIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Continue to strategize how to make use of existing connections such as those with the San Francisco Zoo, the Presidio, local museums, initiatives in health and medicine, and activist organizations to enhance public presence and to show how this department uniquely engages public interest through its anthropology. These are significant contributions of the department to local communities, the region, and the state.

We agree that the visibility of our public anthropology engagement could be increased, and we will put more effort into this area. Several ideas are being developed, and we will continue to work on them. For example, Peter Biella has worked and continues to work in his classes on the

issue of student homelessness and food insecurity. He held a Brown Bag in Spring 2017 to discuss this work, and we have an installation highlighting the findings in our gallery. However, our location on the 5th floor means there is less traffic. Other installations are planned for this space focused on our public anthropology work, but we need to increase their visibility through “opening events”, better use of signage and advertising and better use of University PR opportunities. The film festival planned for the end of Spring 2018 will also highlight student community engagement.

Other avenues we will pursue are participation in the LCA UG research showcase and working with our partners to highlight both student and faculty engagement in their community space. We are also committing to more consistently using the University’s and College’s public relation resources to highlight our public anthropology work.