

## **Student learning outcomes assessment plan, Anthropology, M.A., M.S.**

From new program progress report, fall 2016

### **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment and Program Assessment**

The proposed Master's program in anthropology has three learning objectives.

1. Each student will demonstrate the ability to identify a research project, design a research plan to address that project, perform the necessary research, and present the results of the project.
2. Each student will demonstrate competence in anthropological theory as it applies to their specific subdiscipline of anthropology.
3. Each student will demonstrate competence in the subject material pertinent to their specific subdiscipline of anthropology, including the practical application of knowledge in the subdisciplinary material.

The assessment plan for the proposed Master's program in anthropology will include five components.

1. Learning objective 1 will be assessed early in each student's tenure in the program as each student is required to take Anthropology 460 (Research Design) during the first semester. This course requires each student to design a grant proposal to carry out a specific research project. These proposals are evaluated by the faculty and must meet the rubric of being a fundable project based on the faculty members' experience. Aspects evaluated are the clarity and logic of the project definition, the strength of the research design to approach the project, and the quality of presentation of the proposal.
2. Learning objective 2 is evaluated initially in the required theory course for each concentration (Anthropology 380: History and Theory of Anthropology for the concentrations in cultural anthropology and Japanese studies and Anthropology 460: Archaeological Theory for the concentrations in archaeology and biological anthropology). Students must produce a theoretically sound paper for the appropriate course.

3. The third learning objective will be evaluated through performance in the disciplinary courses required for each concentration. Practical application of knowledge will be demonstrated by successful completion of a field school for archaeology and biological anthropology and either a field school or case studies for the concentrations in Japanese studies and cultural anthropology.

4. All learning objectives are assessed through the requirement that every student in all concentrations must produce and defend a thesis proposal and subsequently a thesis based on independent and original research by the student. Both the proposal and thesis are defended before the entire faculty. Successful completion of the thesis and acceptance of the thesis by the graduate school represent the capstone experience of each student.

5. Additional assessment of the program will derive from exit questionnaires given to each student during the last semester of enrollment in the program. Such questionnaires have proven very useful in the past in identifying student perceived weaknesses of the program. Additionally, the program plans to solicit input from graduate advisors and employers of graduated students to ascertain the advisers' and employers' perceptions of how well the program prepared individuals for the requirements of employment or doctoral programs.

Learning objective 1 will be assessed early in each student's tenure in the program as each student is required to take Anthropology 460: Research Design during the first semester. This course requires each student to design a grant proposal to carry out a specific research project. Proposals are evaluated by the faculty and must meet the rubric of being a fundable project based on the faculty members' experience. Aspects evaluated are clarity and logic of the project definition, strength of the research design to approach the project, and quality of the proposal presentation. This learning objective will be evaluated again near the end of the student's tenure in the program through design and completion of a thesis and defense of the thesis before the entire program faculty.

Learning objective 2, the ability to demonstrate competence in anthropological theory, will be assessed through performance in the theory course applicable to the concentration selected by the student. For students in cultural anthropology and Japanese studies, the appropriate course is Anthropology 380: History and Theory of Anthropology. For students in archaeology and biological anthropology, the appropriate course is Anthropology 460: Archaeological Theory. Students in both courses are required to submit a paper which is then judged by faculty as to its theoretical soundness.

Learning object 3, the ability to demonstrate competence in the chosen concentration, including practical application of knowledge, will be evaluated through student performance in disciplinary courses. In addition, this objective will be evaluated through performance in field school for students in archaeology and biological anthropology and through either performance in field school or quality of a case study for students in cultural anthropology and Japanese studies.

In addition to this assessment plan, an additional Assessment Instrument was added during the 2015 Departmental Program Review. Below is the new assessment tool. These questions will be

asked to all incoming Graduate Students during their Fall semester. These same questions will be asked of all finishing Graduate Students

Assessment Instrument for the Anthropology Master’s Degree Program: December 2015

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel I have a significant level of substantive anthropological knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have a significant level of theoretical anthropological knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have adequate research skills (research design, data collection, analysis, interpretation) for my future needs.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have an adequate understanding of the concept and application of the anthropological perspective.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I am strongly prepared to conduct anthropological research that will result in the successful completion of a master’s thesis.	1	2	3	4	5