



DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM
School of the Arts and Sciences

PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW (PPR)

2018-2019

Part One – Program Self-Study Outline

I. Executive Summary (to be completed at the conclusion of the Self-Study)

The Anthropology department at the College at Brockport offers a Biocultural Perspective on the Human Condition. This broad evolutionary perspective on humanity prepares student for more effective engagement with the contemporary world, in any career path they may follow. Students can pursue an Anthropology major or minor, as well as a minor in Museum Studies, where they will learn anthropological skills and abilities that focus on the critical issues of the 21st century. Our Department prompts students to consider the most important issues that face our world today, along particular thematic topics of focus, from the environment and human impact of ecological changes to inequality, social justice, and human rights, and complexities of human heritage and identity. Students explore these thematic topics in a variety of ways. They might study human biological evolution, variation in human growth and development, and adaptation to past and present environments. In and out of the classroom, anthropology majors observe, listen to, and work with people in communities and organizations to understand how culture, power, and history are mobilized by different groups for different purposes. Locally and abroad, they excavate sites to recover material culture or artifacts in order to understand the past and how it relates to present-day concerns from the cultural heritage preservation to climate change.

The Anthropology major curriculum exposes students to diverse methodologies, theoretical frameworks and case studies relevant to the origins and realities of human socio-cultural systems, in the past and in the present. Its primary goals are to prepare our students to do the following:

- Gain an understanding of the broad *knowledge base* of human biocultural diversity through time and across cultures, as provided through archaeology, biological and cultural anthropology.
- Gain knowledge and skills in the different anthropological research *methods* used in the sub-fields of archaeology, biological or cultural anthropology.
- Learn to define and describe anthropological *theory* as used in current and past practice by anthropologists, in archaeology, biological and/or cultural anthropology.
- Develop the *ability to question, reflect and critique* the data and arguments upon which evaluations of human diversity, behavior and change are made.
- Learn to *apply theories and methods* to explain or interpret anthropological problems, including cross-cultural patterns of social behavior, human evolution, and social change over time and space.
- Learn the *appropriate procedures and ethical protocols* for obtaining informed consent or access permissions, in order to avoid harm or wrong to one's human or non-human subjects and descendants.

The Anthropology faculty engage students through their scholarly and pedagogical work as well as a rigorous and up-to-date curriculum. Our intent is to promote student excellence through transformative educational experiences, which will prepare them for success beyond the

classroom. At the institutional level, our interdisciplinary curriculum contributes to the liberal arts core. We provide students with high-impact, co-curricular activities in a supportive learning environment, in ways that contribute to the ideals of life-long learning, connectedness to the campus and to the great community.

The Anthropology department's leadership has been inconsistent, with a series of interim chairs and short-term chairs instead of one permanent leader for over eight years. We are looking to improve this in the future by clarifying our departmental vision, formalizing transparent departmental procedures and policies, and maintaining consistent and ethical internal governance.

Enrollment has been declining and we have undertaken a number of internal and external outreach efforts to make our department sustainable into the future. Internally, we are currently working on strategies to better market and advertise the program as well as increase enrollment through interdisciplinary collaboration with other departments. We recently submitted a proposal for a new joint major with the Criminal Justice Department called "Community Justice" that we hope will expose students who would not be familiar with anthropology to the field. We are also exploring an accelerated pathway to the Master's in Public Administration program. This is in recognition of the handful of recent alumni who have entered this program and the prevalence in which our graduates tend to pursue careers in such areas as health administration, public safety and security, non-profit agencies and governmental agencies. We are confident these programmatic additions will help alleviate the declining number of majors. Additionally, the outreach efforts of our faculty whether it be via research, teaching endeavors or professional service obligations (e.g. Smith's leadership in planning Family Archaeology Day, Ramsay's lecture at the Memorial Art Gallery, Esara Carroll's participation on the Rochester Library Branch Planning Advisory Committee, etc) continue to publicize our department, College and discipline in general.

In the last ten years the Anthropology faculty have been in transition. Since the last PPR in 2013, three faculty are now tenured that were not that time. Our Medical Anthropologist retired in the spring of 2016. We received a tenure line for an Historical Archaeologist who began this fall and was part of our vision in the 2015 joint action plan. Additionally, we had the good fortune of being able to maintain our visiting assistant professor Biological Anthropologist, who was hired after a national search and has been with us since 2010 on a renewable contract. We were also able to move an adjunct Cultural Anthropology faculty member into a limited-term (ending spring 2019) full-time position in the fall of 2016, when our Medical Anthropologist retired. As a result, we currently have six full time faculty members as opposed to our usual five. In the future we would like to achieve six full-time tenure-track faculty again. The majority of faculty would like two Cultural Anthropologists, two Archaeologists and eventually two Biological Anthropologists to balance out our curriculum. Once we have shown growth in our program, we are confident we will be able to achieve this goal.