

## Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements

### Department of Anthropology BA Program in Anthropology AY2009-10

#### Key Assessment Findings

Table 1 demonstrates the results of the undergraduate comprehensive exams for two consecutive academic years (AY2008-09 and AY 2009-10). In AY2009-2010, seven students passed the exam and one failed. In AY2008-09, all of the four students who attempted the exam passed.

Table 1  
**UNDERGRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS**  
Department of Anthropology  
AY2008-2009 through AY2009-2010

	Fail		Pass		High Pass		Pass w/Distinction		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AY2008-2009	0	0.00%	4	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4
AY2009-2010	1	12.50%	7	87.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	8

Table 2 presents the score statistics of the rubrics developed during 2008-2009 which were used to evaluate the September and February Senior Comprehensive Exams. Their effectiveness in grading the exams and for incorporating grades in the senior capstone options were reviewed in the March faculty meeting. The exercise revealed a lack of satisfaction with student performance in the identification of key concepts section of the exam and weaknesses in the analytical portion. Several factors seem to account for it, including inconsistent completion of 100-level survey courses, which for majors introduce them to the scope of the discipline. We believe that the advice in our Advising Guidelines for Anthropology Majors, that these courses need to be completed before attempting Senior Comps, needs to be reaffirmed in advising, and perhaps made a requirement.

Table 2  
**Table of Results**  
**Student Learning Assessment Rubric**  
**Department of Anthropology**  
**Senior Comprehensive Assessment**  
**AY2009-10**

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
<b>1) Identify key concepts in anthropology &amp; their empirical referents</b>	1	14%	4	57%	2	29%	1.86	0.69	7
<b>2) Think critically about (compare) concepts &amp; theories in anthropology</b>	0	0%	5	71%	2	29%	1.71	0.49	7
<b>3) Integrate data into existing concepts &amp; theories</b>	0	0%	4	57%	3	43%	1.57	0.53	7
<b>4) Understand anthropological approaches to diversity</b>	0	0%	6	86%	1	14%	1.86	0.38	7
<b>5) Find appropriate primary &amp; secondary resources</b>	0	0%	4	57%	3	43%	1.57	0.53	7
<b>6) Formulate researchable problems using concepts &amp; theories in anthropology</b>	4	67%	2	33%	0	0%	2.67	0.52	6

- Note: 1) The "N" represents the number of students at each level of performance for each trait.  
2) The "%" represents the percentage of the number of students falling at the level performance for each trait against the total number of students.  
3) The mean is the average of all scores across the levels within the trait.  
4) The standard deviation (SD) is the measure of the variability of the data set, indicating how "spread out" these data are from the mean value.

## Curricular Improvements

It needs to be emphasized that mid-level Anthropology courses are research- based, organized around topics to which anthropologists contribute, and taught by specialists who contribute to these topics. Teaching to both Anthropology majors and majors in other disciplines places a burden on our majors to link topics to issues, methods, approaches in Anthropology that needs addressing. Should these include more reference back to perspectives and methods?

Testing and writing requirements in mid-level courses that are adequate for assessing performance in individual courses serving multiple constituencies and distribution requirements in other programs may not be sufficiently cumulative or integrative for majors to connect them specifically to the discipline. Should these include minimum vocabularies?

Decisions:

- 1) Advising needs to be made firmer and more consistent, particularly for students who switch into the major after the freshman year.
- 2) The Dictionary of Anthropology, which majors are required to buy in ANTH 200 and advised to keep for reference, will be listed as recommended reading for majors on the syllabuses of all Anthropology courses above 200 to emphasize its use as a reference work.
- 3) Upon enrolling as an Anthropology concentrator, students will be given a copy of the Senior Assessment Rubric as a statement of goals and standards (performance) for the program in addition to the Advising Guidelines on how to construct a major (structure).
- 4) To ensure that students progress appropriately within limitations of what four full-time faculty supplemented by three instructors can offer, majors will not be allowed to preregister without having consulted their advisors and filing the Advising Report sheet with the Department.