

SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

I. Program Assessment Meetings

The SOCA faculty met a number of times in the Fall of 2017 and Spring of 2018, most recently May 9 and 18.

Tasks for Professor McClusky:

Worked on a rewrite of Mission Statement and Assessment Plan.

Why? In order to make these docs better reflect both the College Mission Statement and the actual Learning Objectives of the courses we teach.

Process.

- Collected the Learning Objectives for each class taught this year in the SOCA program, sorted them to find similar objectives to find sites of assessment and compared these to current Assessment Plan.

Action:

- Simplified the language of the Mission Statement
- Added depth to the Assessment Plan by identifying sites of Exposure, Reinforcement and Mastery.
- Simplified Learning Goals
- Provided faculty a focus for discussion about assessment.

Worked on assessment of **Program Goal 1** (see last year's annual report and assessment plan).

Collected data related to **Program Goal 1**

Tasks for Professor Renfrow:

Worked on assessment of **Program Goal 1** (see last year's annual report and assessment plan).

Collected data related to **Program 1** (students should be able to use sociological/anthropological vocabulary) in two places: SOC 151 Principles of Sociology and SOC 363 Sociological Theory.

Provided a comparative assessment framework from work done on the CRIM assessment report for 2017-18 and plan for 2018-19.

Tasks for Professor Olson:

Collected data related to **Program Goal 1** for ANTH 161 and ANTH 330, Program Goals 2 & 3 for ANTH 359, and Program Goals 3 & 4 for ANTH 210 and ANTH 250.

Held SOCA meetings on Assessment and wrote the annual report for 2017-18.

Collective SOCA Task:

During 2017-2018 faculty continued to examining their individual course goals to provide more detail and accuracy to our assessment plan.

The work of 2017-18 focused on defining and measuring outcomes for our individual courses—particularly for **Program Goal 1**.

Assessment data collected in 2017-2018 has helped us to refine our assessment plan to more accurately assess student learning. Our assessment report for 2017-18 provides both top down (from faculty perspective – as we examine the goals of our individual courses) and bottom up (from student perspective – as we evaluate information students provided in their comprehensive exams) data to help us further understand where we might best assess our goals and objectives.

II. Closing the Loop

Our 2017-18 Assessment Report:

1. Focuses on assessing a number of SOCA courses, as relevant, in relation to Program Goal 1.
2. Focuses on clarifying and articulating the ways in which each SOC and ANTH course connects to the Wells College Mission statement and to the mission statement of the major.
3. “Maps out” Program Goal 1 and Learning Objective 1 (and perhaps 2) found in each SOC and ANTH course.
4. Expands and refines the Assessment tools and process for Program Goal 1 and Learning Objective 1 (and 2) delineated for each SOC and ANTH course.
5. Concludes that we need to do more work in creating specific, clearly delineated, useful rubrics for each course.

III. Examination of Data

This section includes our assessment “map” for 2017-18 and our report on success in implementing our goals as stated in our assessment plan for 2017-18 (see our plan to assess Program Goal 1). For ease of reference for examining our data, our Program Goals and Learning Objectives have been included in this section of the assessment report.

2. Program Goals:

Our program goals are fourfold:

- 1) to develop informed critical scholars who can communicate in the language of sociology and anthropology
- 2) to introduce students to timely and enduring issues in sociology and anthropology
- 3) to open students' eyes to structural injustices as well as develop an appreciation for diverse lifeways, and
- 4) to allow students the opportunity to think about creating a more just, equitable and sustainable society.

3. Learning Objectives:

Program Goal 1: to develop informed critical scholars who can communicate in the language of sociology and anthropology.

Learning Objective 1: Students will be able to engage in professional discourse both verbally and through writing.

Measurable Outcome:

1) Students will participate in class

a. **Assessment of Outcome:** Students will take classes where discussion is required as part of the grade. 70% of student will receive a passing grade on this requirement. **Where Can This Be Assessed: ANTH 161, SOC 151, ANTH 210, ANTH 250, ANTH 260, SOC 277, ANTH 330, SOC 363, ANTH 345, ANTH 359**

2) Students will be able to use ASA and AAA format in research papers or for essay exams

a. **Assessment of Outcome:** 70% of students in a given class that requires essay writing will demonstrate proper use of ASA and AAA format. **Where Assessed: SOC 151**

3) Students will be able to present a poster presentation of their thesis.

a. **Assessment of Outcome:** 100% of students will create a poster of their thesis work. 90% will be able to present it to the campus wide community. **Where Assessed: ANTH 210; SOC 401, thesis presentation**

4) Students will present their research at a professional conference (NYSSA, NEAA, NCUR, ESS, AAA, etc.)

Learning Objective 2: Students will be aware of and be able to use theoretical frameworks and concepts.

Measurable Outcome:

1) Students will be gain mastery of sociological and anthropological concepts.

a) **Assessment of Outcome:** 70% of students will receive passing grade on sections of exams where vocabulary is specifically tested **ANTH 50, ANTH 345, ANTH 330, ANTH 385, SOC 277, SOC 363**

- b) **Assessment of Outcome:** 70% of students will receive passing grade on sections of exams where they are asked to apply concepts in essay form. **ANTH 250, ANTH 345, ANTH 330, ANTH 385**

Report from Professor Renfrow for SOC 151: Principles of Sociology for Program Goal 1, Learning Objective 1.

Thirty-four students enrolled in SOC 151 Fall Semester of 2017. Bi-weekly quizzes completed outside of class through Moodle assessed students' beginning exposure to sociological concepts. Each quiz included five to six multiple choice or true/false questions based on the week's readings and new concepts introduced through lecture and/or discussion. The class average for each quiz is 22, 23, 23, 18, 18, and 24 out of 25 total points. A majority of students passed these quizzes, so students appear to have met our success criterion for this learning outcome. These data suggest that students have learned basic definitions for core sociological concepts.

Report from Professor Renfrow for SOC 363: Sociological Theory for Program Goal 1, Learning Objective 1.

Nine students enrolled in SOC 363 this Spring Semester of 2018. The first exam included three items that assessed students' ability to apply classical concepts (e.g., anomie) to quotes from important sociological texts (e.g., passages from de Tocqueville's Democracy in America). Students were to name the concept and the theorist who coined the concept, and to describe how the quote exemplifies the concept in a short response. The average score for students on each item was 3, 3, and 4 out of five points possible: half of the students earned 75% or higher on these items. These results suggest that students have not yet mastered these foundational concepts in order to apply them in complex ways. Additional work is needed to ensure that they do.

Assessment of SOC 151 and SOC 363 for Learning Objective 1:

Taken together, these data suggest that beginning students have learned basic concepts as assessed through objective exam questions. However, more advanced students continue to struggle to apply these concepts in more complex, open-ended assessment formats. In the future, I will utilize two strategies to provide students more opportunity to practice applying concepts in SOC 363. First, we will work through additional examples together through in-class discussion. This will help model the process for students. Secondly, we will ask students to complete short in-class writing exercises where I will ask them to apply a set of concepts to an example I provide. Both of these strategies should help students learn and allow us to assess their abilities prior to the first exam.

Report from Professor Olson for Program Goal 1, Learning Objective #1 for ANTH 161 Introduction to Anthropology

There were 23 students enrolled in ANTH 161.

Stated goals for ANTH 161 included:

1. Introduce students to the value of ethnographic case studies via inclusion of a number of required ethnographic texts.
2. Introduce students to key concepts such as culture, cultural relativity, cultural diversity, participant-observation, and ethnography.
3. Introduce students to the primary sub-areas or subfields such as cultural ecology, medical anthropology, economic anthropology, and so forth.

Assessment of ANTH 161 for Learning Objective 1: was facilitated through a number of writing assignments. Students were required to do two in-class essay writing assignments, two essay exams (midterm and a final), a kinship chart of a fellow classmate, and a problem/solution paper.

Examples of Two Final Exam Questions from Fall Semester 2017:

1. Discuss the challenges of twenty-first century global migration in relationship to biomedicine, ethnomedicine, and critical medical anthropology. What can each of these three approaches contribute to health care in contexts of large-scale migration? Your discussion of challenges in the areas of migration and health care should include consideration of inequality, social stratification, culture change and loss, and globalization within systems of power. Include ethnographic examples as relevant.
2. Discuss the concepts of cultural authenticity and cultural representation, cultural survival and revival, and cultural identity. Illustrate your answer with examples from such things as tattooing, subsistence practices, dance, sport, language use, museum exhibits, food and feasts, and key rituals, to name a few. Be sure to discuss three different cultures as found in course lectures, videos, and texts.

Results:

A majority of students successfully received a passing grade on these assignments and gave evidence of at least a rudimentary grasp of key anthropological concepts; the top 10-20% of students gave evidence of the ability to integrate concepts with theoretical models and ethnographic case studies.

Future Action:

- 1) Add a "first-day-of-class" pre-course assessment questions
- 2) Put greater emphasis on using Chicago style citations.
- 3) Increase emphasis on key anthropological theoretical models
- 4) Increase emphasis on oral presentation skills
- 5) Maintain and fine tune problem-solution writing assignments

Report from Professor Olson for Program Goal 1, Learning Objectives 1 and 2 for ANTH 250
Hawaii: Colonialism and Tourism

There were 17 students enrolled in ANTH 250 for the Fall Semester of 2017

ANTH 250 Builds on key ANTH 161 key concepts of culture, cultural relativity, cultural change.

The course focuses on colonialism and culture, plantation capitalism, ethnic diversity and immigration, cultures and militarism, multiculturalism and globalization.

Course Goals:

1. Build student knowledge of foundational material of introductory courses in Anthropology and Sociology.
2. Explore scholarship and scholarly texts from a range of academic disciplines and improve skills in the analysis of qualitative and quantitative research findings.
3. Improve student skills for writing essays within a social science theoretical framework.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will build on their understanding from ANTH 161 (and /or other SOCA courses) of the key concepts of culture, cultural relativity, colonialism, culture change, migration, plantation colonialism, linguistic diversity, multiculturalism, plantation capitalism, labor inequality, and globalization at the local cultural level.
2. Students will gain a rich understanding of academic scholarship in anthropology and other disciplines and improve analytical skills in their integration of the key concepts listed in #1 in their study of the cultures of Hawaii.
3. Students will improve their ability to write response essays that focus on key issues in contemporary anthropology.

Two examples of course requirements are listed below:

EXAMPLE ONE:

Writing Assignment 1:

Consider the importance of the revival of *lua* and tapa cloth production for contemporary Hawaiian cultural identity and practice. How do *lua* and tapa cloth production compare to other cultural practices such as paddling, long-distance voyaging, and surfing as a means of cultural revival and continuance?

EXAMPLE TWO:

Third Response Paper and Final Assignment for ANTH 250, Fall Semester, 2017

The course has encouraged you to become educated on the history of colonization and current rapid development, land loss and eviction, unemployment, high rates of poverty, a crisis of poor

health and healthcare, and the chronic threat of crime for many local populations in contemporary Hawaii. At the same time you have been exposed to a number of examples of positive cultural revitalization, cultural pluralism, and efforts for social justice and equality.

With course materials in mind (see especially *Skin Stories*, *Kupu Mana'olana: Seeds of Hope*, *Ho'okele Wa'a*, *Malama Haloa*, and *The Hawaiians: Reflecting Spirit*), consider some possible "seeds of hope" for 21st century Hawaii in regard to social justice, economic wellbeing, health, food security, cultural survival, environment sustainability, land stewardship, and creative freedom.

Your essay needs to be 4-6 pages and is due by 5:00 pm. On December 11.

Assessment results for ANTH 250 for Program Goal 1, Learning Objectives 1 and 2:

Written and oral assignments suggest that over 90% of ANTH 250 students successfully built on their understanding of the key concepts of culture, cultural relativity, colonialism, culture change, migration, plantation colonialism, linguistic diversity, multiculturalism, plantation capitalism, labor inequality, and globalization at the local cultural level.

Written and oral assignments indicate that over 75% of students were able to provide evidence of a significant gain in understanding of academic scholarship in anthropology and evidence of improved analytical skills in their integration of the key concepts listed in #1.

Written and oral assignments indicate that over 75% of students significantly improved their ability to write response essays that focused on timely issues (Learning Objective 2) in anthropology.

Future Action:

- 6) Add a "first-day-of-class" pre-course assessment questions
- 7) Put greater emphasis on using Chicago style citations.
- 8) Increase emphasis on key anthropological theoretical models
- 9) Increase emphasis on oral presentation skills
- 10) Maintain and fine tune problem-solution writing assignments

Report from Professor McClusky: Learning Objective #1: ANTH 260 Ethnographic Methods

There were 3 students enrolled in this class. I added a section to the ANTH 260 class where students returned to an Intro to Anthropology textbook to examine the culture concept, and then use this concept in articulating a qualitative inductive methodology for their class projects. The hope was that this would make students more thoughtful in understanding the strengths of participant-observation for examining culture. This was assessed through an assignment which became a methodology section of their final project. Students were then allowed to do a rewrite this assignment before they turned the final project in at the

end of the semester. It was again assessed when the students handed in their final projects.

- Results: 100% (3/3) of the students referenced the culture concept in their methodology section of their final project; 2/3 were able to relate this concept to the ways their specific project and methods examined culture.
- Action: I will keep this assignment and approach to methodology in the course work for ANTH 260.

Report from Professor McClusky for Program Goal 1, Learning Objective 1 & 2 for SOC 277: Social Inequality

Students were required to develop their understanding of race and class throughout the semester by answering an essay question on each exam that asked them to define these concepts.

- Results: 85% of the students were able to make their definitions of race and class more nuanced and based in theoretical concepts on the second exam. 95% were able to do so by the third exam.
- Action: The exam question assumed students would apply newly learned examples and nuances to their definitions on the third exam. Those who failed to do so just repeated their answer to the second exam thinking the question was about retention rather than developing a nuanced understanding. I will continue to take this assessment tool but clarify the instructions to the students about the approach they should take.

Report from Professor McClusky for ANTH 385 Anthropology of Violence for assessment of Program Goal 1, Learning Objective 2.

By requiring students to take an anonymous part of the first two exams. The first exam asked students if the class helped them to think critically, reason wisely and act humanely (College Mission Statement), and if so how. The second asked students if the class helped them to use theoretical frameworks to examine enduring and timely social issues, and if so how.

- Results:
 - **Exam 1: Mission Statement:**
 - 12 out of 13 students completed this section of the first exam.
 - 100% agreed that the class helped them to think critically, reason wisely and act humanely.
 - 11 gave provided an argument that referred to class readings or discussions

- 3 provided a caveat = 2 cited emotions getting in the way of critical thinking, 1 said we needed more points of view
- **Exam 2: Learning Goal 2: Students will be aware of and be able to use theoretical frameworks to examine enduring and timely social issues.**
 - 10 out of 13 students completed this section of the second exam
 - 40% agreed but gave no specifics
 - 60% agreed and gave specific examples
 - 20% gave complex examples in theory and issues
 - 20% gave specific mention of theory
 - 20% gave superficial examples of issues
 - 60% made reference to current events
- **Actions:**
 - Immediate: Since one on the second exam question responded that they were confused as to what a theoretical framework was, I spent the next class clarifying the frameworks and concepts we had covered so far.
 - Long Term: The responses overall were positive, but not very rich showing the limits of this sort of assessment tool. The course is primarily discussion based, and different strategies for engaging in discussion can help student better address the assessment question and the course materials. For example, during discussions I will periodically ask the students if they are responding with reason or emotion to help them to distinguish between the two. It might be helpful to occasionally ask them what an opposing argument might be.

Report from Professor McClusky for Program Goal 1, Learning Goal #1 and 2 for ANTH 345: Maya Ethnography

5 students enrolled in ANTH 345 this year. Students developed their writing skills while writing about several topics important to anthropology in general and to the study of Maya specifically. What follows are the essay prompts for three of the four papers required in that class. As you can see they progress from simply writing well to writing that uses the style and format of anthropology. The students were able to develop their writing and their use of the language of anthropology via specific topics concepts such as the phenomenological approach to the anthropological study of genocide, frozen grief, the grey zone, limit points and globalization.

Due March 1 in-class; if you hand in either essay in any time after class, I will reduce the grade for each essay by 1 letter grade.

Pick two of the following prompts and write a 3-5 page essay in response to each one. (That means you have to write two essays.) Clearly indicate on your paper which prompt you are answering. Double-space and 12 pt. font are required.

Do not simply answer these off the top of your head. Refer to the readings, tell me in detail what the scholars we read have to say about the topic, provide examples from the readings, and write well. I will base a portion of your grade on your ability to communicate your thoughts in writing and on how well you use the sources to construct your essay. This is a 300-level anthropology course. You must exhibit reading and writing skills that are commensurate with the level of this course.

1. Why is it important to tell the story of what happened in Guatemala from the perspective of the Maya? Given what we read so far this semester, what do we gain in our understanding of what happened from listening to this perspective? Why is this important? What do we know from listening to Maya?
2. For many years, Maya were unable to talk about what was happening. Why? What were the consequences of not being able to talk about it? What happened to help them speak and bear witness? How did it help? How might it complicate a person's life?
3. Primo Levi uses the term "the grey zone" to talk about the fact that responsibility for horrendous acts is much more complicated than simply seeing people as either "good" or "evil." Write an essay that discusses how we might use this concept when looking at the Guatemalan genocide. Is it important to lay blame? To find who is responsible? Why? How do we do that?

ANTH 345: Exam 2

Spring 2018

Write an essay in response to the following essay prompt. 3-5 pages, double spaced, 12 point font, standard format. Cite like an anthropologist. Write well. You are not allowed to crowd source or work in groups.

Be sure to cite the sources we have read for class.

ESSAY PROMPT: What is a "limit point"? What does the concept of "limit point" help us understand about Maya people trying to make a better life? What are the hegemonic aspects of a limit point? How does it help us break the binary of globalization as either "good" or "bad"?

ANTH 345 Maya Ethnography

Spring 2018

The prompt for the final paper is in the syllabus....this is what it says:

Final/Term paper: You are required to write a 10 page paper that deals with one of the recurring topics we discuss over the course of the semester. Think of this as a cumulative exam answering a question or essay prompt of your creation. This is a formal paper using AAA format for citing sources and preparing a bibliography. It does not require research beyond the class readings, but if you want to go beyond class readings you can. Class readings should make up the majority of the sources for this paper, however. This will be due when our final is scheduled and is worth 25% of your grade. **I will NOT accept this electronically.** (We'll discuss appropriate topics off and on over the course of the semester.)

- Results – The students enrolled this semester varied in their level of preparation for success in the course. Enrollment included two first year students, two seniors, and one sophomore. The approach of essay exams allowed each student to begin at a certain level and develop their skills and understanding of anthropological approaches and topics. While not all students ended up in the same place, all improved. One first year student went from a D- on the first paper to a B- on her final. Her final demonstrates that she was able to develop her general writing skills, began to intermittently use AAA format and complete an essay on the ways Maya have been affected by U.S. government policies and the consumer actions of U.S. citizens. The other first year student likewise improved her skills and knowledge by starting at a C+ level for her first paper and eventually turning in an A- paper that demonstrates an ability to write well, consistently use Chicago formatting and write about Maya resilience through cultural survival.

Report from Professor Olson For Program Goal 1, Learning Objective 2 for ANTH 359: The Pacific and Cultural Survival.

Course Objectives:

1. Provide students with the opportunity to synthesize anthropological concepts and theoretical perspectives.
2. Provide students the framework to develop a critical appreciation for culture and cultural analysis at the intersections of the local and the global as found in a full range of cultures of the Pacific.

Assessment Goal: Assess student success in achieving these course objectives.

First-day-of-class assessment:

1. What colonial powers have been historically active in the Pacific region?
2. Can you name any anthropologists who have done research in the Pacific region?
3. Can you think of any anthropological concepts, theories, or ethnographies that are associated with the Pacific?

4. Can you name any anthropological concepts or theories that you would consider useful in a study of the Pacific region?
5. Can you think of specific ways in which you are connected to processes of economic, environmental, and cultural change in the Pacific region?
6. Can you think of ways in which globalization is affecting the Pacific region?

Results of Pre Course Test:

Minimal responses to these questions indicated students had a minimal degree of knowledge of the course subject matter prior to taking the course.

Course Requirements:

1. Comparative Review of two ethnographies of the Pacific
2. Comparative Review of two ethnographic films of the Pacific
3. Comparative review of two or more Pacific cultures
4. Two problem-solution papers

Example of an Assignment:

First Problem-Solution Paper:

For this assignment you will need to choose one of the cultures we have discussed and/or reviewed. After making this choice, you must take on the role of an applied anthropologist in order to describe and evaluate the current problems and challenges faced by the culture in regard to colonialism, western influences, issues of development (mining, lumbering, tourism, etc.), climate change, migration, and culture loss/change. After describing and discussing the many challenges faced by your chosen culture, you need to consider prospects for the culture's future and propose possible solutions to some of these challenges.

Results:

100% success with student written and oral responses to questions calling for concrete examples of culture change, climate change, and cultural responses to specific processes of globalization

75-100% success with students' ability to write essay problem-solution responses that incorporated critical theory from course materials.

More modest success (ranging from 50% to 25% on individual assignments) for synthesis of students' written and oral responses to higher level theoretical frameworks provided by course materials.

Action:

1. Place more emphasis on full range of anthropological theory
2. Place greater emphasis on library research for the problem-solution papers

3. Maintain focus on class participation and oral presentations
4. Add a poster session to course requirements

Report from Professor Olson For Program Goal 1, Learning Objective 2 for ANTH 330:

Course Objectives:

1. Expose students to core anthropological concepts and theoretical perspectives
2. Provide students with the ability to synthesize anthropological concepts, and theoretical perspectives
3. Provide students with a framework that encourages them to develop a deep, critical appreciation for culture and cultural analysis at local and global levels
4. Encourage students to gain an ability to write and communicate orally in the discipline of anthropology
5. Provide students with some of the current anthropological research as undertaken in various cultural contexts around the globe

First-day-of-class assessment

Assessment of pre-knowledge of anthropological concepts and theoretical frameworks.

Questions

Results: Majority of students were able to provide basic, foundational knowledge of primary anthropological/sociological theoretical models.

Only the top 15-20% were able to provide good to excellent knowledge of primary anthropological/sociological theoretical models.

Assignment Example 1:

Mariam Kahn speaks of gaining insight from the contradictions of cultural reality. In her ethnography, she writes of contradictions between town and villages, sandy beaches and garbage-filled beaches, tourism and local reality, happy local people and angry locals. To Evaluate Kahn's ethnographic presentation of apparent contradictions, discuss the connections of perceived space (physical, tangible, material), conceived space (mental space composed of representations, signs, symbols, codes, ideas), and lived space (third space: fully lived space of both physical and imagined engagement, the dynamic space of everyday experience).

Assignment Example 2:

This assignment entails the completion of a 4-5 page review of an ethnographic museum exhibit of your choice. Your review MUST include relevant theoretical material from Mariam

Kahn's *Tahiti: Beyond the Postcard* and any other course material deemed relevant. Your review might very well focus on questions of ethnographic accuracy, cultural authenticity and appropriateness, cultural appropriation of materials and voices, and empowerment/disempowerment of cultures via colonialism, globalization, tourism, or other factors.

Results:

100% of students were able to earn a grade of C or higher on all assignments.

Over 50% of students were able to earn a grade of B or higher.

Over 25% of students were able to earn a grade of B+ or higher.

Action:

1. Maintain focus on class participation and oral presentations
2. Continue requirement of student discussion leadership responsibilities
3. Add a poster session to course requirements
4. Build a stronger, more coherent and comprehensive rubric for student assessment

IV. Program Changes

During 2017-2018 faculty continued to examine their individual course goals and objectives in order to build more detail and accuracy to our assessment plan.

We continued our work in defining Measurable Outcomes for our individual classes. Assessment data collected in 2017-2018 has helped us to refine our assessment plan to more accurately assess student learning. Assessment data has given us a comparative framework for a more complete “map” of the ways in which each individual course specifically fits into our major’s assessment plan.

We continue to make significant changes to the ways in which we implement assessment for each of your specific courses.

V. Action Plan

Our assessment report for 2017-2018 continues to add to our top down (from faculty perspective – as we examine the goals of our individual courses) and bottom up (from student perspective – as we examine information students provided in their comprehensive exams) data to help us assess our goals and objectives.

1. Meet three times each semester (beginning, middle and end)
2. Work on general and course-specific rubrics

3. Add pre-course assessment tools to each course
4. Follow the guidelines set out in our 2018-19 assessment plan

Respectfully submitted,

Ernie Olson
Chair
Sociology/Anthropology