

Department of Anthropology 2022 Assessment Report

MISSION STATEMENT

The core mission of the Department of Anthropology is to impart an anthropological understanding of the human condition through teaching, research, and service. The Anthropology undergraduate major program is designed to:

- (1) provide a stimulating and challenging curriculum that will enable students to understand and appreciate the range of human cultures, languages, and biological diversity from prehistoric times to the present;
- (2) promote and develop the ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and comprehend the complexities of an increasingly culturally diverse world;
- (3) create an atmosphere to impart anthropological knowledge to students through creative research, teaching, and public service; and
- (4) prepare students to apply their anthropological knowledge and skills in graduate programs as well as careers in public and private sectors. These goals are congruent with the mission of the University of Montana-Missoula.

DEPARTMENT ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

After listing each departmental objective, indicate which of the five [Priorities for Action](#) the objective supports. In this section, you may also briefly describe any innovative or noteworthy programs/initiatives that support the Priorities for Action

1. Prepare undergraduate majors and minors in the core knowledge, methods, and critical research skills of the discipline. (This department objective meshes best with Strategic Opportunity 1—Engage students where they are; it also meets Strategic Opportunity 2—Invest in People)
2. Provide students with the opportunity to gain basic knowledge in at least three substantive sub-disciplines of anthropology: biological anthropology, archaeology, and linguistic anthropology, with renewed emphasis on indigenous peoples in the Americas: a content knowledge area of expertise for 9 of the 13 tenured faculty in archaeology, biological, linguistic and cultural heritage studies. (This department objective meshes best with Strategic Opportunity 2—Invest in People; and Strategic Goal 3—Partner with Place)
3. Provide students with the opportunity to gain knowledge of the discipline beyond the classroom via guided research, internship, particularly in the Anthropology Collections and laboratories, independent study, and summer field schools. (This department objective meshes best with Strategic Opportunity 3—Partner with Place, as well as Strategic Opportunity 5—Foster Knowledge Creation and Innovation).
4. Prepare students to conduct and convey results of independent anthropological research through renovated methods curriculum in 2022: 1) a new, online anthropological statistics course (ANTY 208); 2) an expanded four-fields survey methods course (ANTY 401) approved by Faculty Senate, and 3) continued sub-field methods courses designated Advanced Writing in the Major (ANTY 431 and 455) for this assessment. (This department objective fits with Strategic Opportunity 5—Foster Knowledge Creation and Innovation)
5. Enhance accessibility of one of the most popular lower division anthropology courses available to non-majors: ANTY 220S (X): Culture and Society, the only dual designated general education course (VII Social Sciences/X Cultural Diversity) offered online at UM, and at UM-Western, FVCC and MSUB. The course is undergoing substantial renovation to reflect content knowledge assessment for Spring and Summer 2023. ANTY 220S is a new degree requirement for students in the professional Schools: B.A. degrees in Public Health, and Community Health, as well as Minor degrees in International Development and Global Public Health in the College. (This department objective meshes best with Strategic Opportunity 1—Engage Students where they are, as well as Strategic Opportunity 4—Reinvent the Heart of the Curriculum)

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES and MEASUREMENT TOOLS

Student Learning Outcomes	APA (Entrance Survey)	ASEA (Exit Survey)	Adv. Writing course rubric
Goal 1: Gain discipline-wide knowledge, including the four core sub-disciplines of anthropology (socio-cultural anthropology, physical anthropology, archaeology, and linguistic anthropology).	2019: Mean and mode scores from all APA items. <i>replaced in 2022:</i> APA items will be incorporated into core course quizzes and final exam.	2019: A percentage of responses to selected ASEA items. <i>Senior survey will be revived</i> for students applying to graduate May 2023-2026.	See Appendix
Goal 2: Interpret and convey knowledge and values about the diversity of the human condition.	2019: Mean and mode scores from all APA items. <i>Replaced in 2022</i> with rubric assessment of essays in ANTY 220 and ANTY 430 or ANTY 431 (Adv. Writing in the Major)	2019: A percentage of responses to selected ASEA items. <i>Senior survey will be revived</i> for students applying to graduate May 2023-2026	
Goal 3: Impart a set of problem-solving skills and methods that can be applied to various human issues.	Evaluate skills gained relative to rubric for writing assignments in ANTY 401, 431, or 455 (Adv. Writing in the Major)	A percentage of responses to selected ASEA items. <i>Senior survey will be revived</i> for students applying to graduate May 2023-2026.	

RESULTS and MODIFICATIONS

Student Learning Outcomes results	Modifications made to enhance learning
1. The APA and ASEA have not been consistently applied to graduating cohorts since 2018. In the past 4 years, 132 students have graduated in Anthropology, but there is no consistent data on their scores coming into the program, or upon graduation. Also, during this time period, due to sabbaticals, core and advanced writing courses were taught by adjunct instructors, and no assessment data was collected in the classroom neither for general education, nor the program. Where assessment data was available through courses taught by tenured faculty (ANTY 430 and 431, also 455 once), the program assessment will be restructured both in the classroom experience, and through exit survey and objective tests for graduating students. In addition, tenured faculty will teach the online core courses, replacing graduate TA and adjunct instructors.	The Learning Outcomes for Anthropology program will be included in the renovated ANTY 220, and the new general survey methods course ANTY 401 syllabi, and highlighted in the first week of class as a writing exercise, as well as in class evaluations at the end of the course. Since all core and several methods courses also meet learning outcomes for general education (Social Science, Cultural and International Diversity, and Advanced Writing in the Major), those GE learning outcomes will be openly discussed, emphasized in assignments, and a topic for in class writing exercises and end of course evaluation. Students' written reflections in at least one core course will be compared from the first to the fifteenth week for evidence of reflexive mastery and growth in content knowledge and specific professional skills in the sub-field disciplines.
2.. Since 2003, ANTY methods courses have engaged students through field-based undergraduate research in archaeological field school, biological laboratory research, linguistic pedagogy in language revitalization, archival and ethnographic participant-observation. Both theory and methods courses were approved as Advanced Writing in the Major in 2018, with two sections in person and online (431 in 2019, 430 in 2021) for comparison of learning outcomes. Rubric centered assessment and individual course evaluations indicate ANTY majors benefit from a that focus on writing skills, and oral presentations through UMCUR.	Students in the Advanced Writing methods courses will be encouraged to participate in undergraduate research and internship opportunities and/or present at UMCUR, as part of capstone experience(s) for juniors and seniors. Capstone experiences will focus on fieldwork-based research skills collecting data, including language revitalization, laboratory experience, field school and archaeological survey courses, as well as collecting oral histories for archival research and analysis of artifacts and collections management through a new certificate in Cultural Heritage Studies. All of these innovations will be highlighted in the next assessment report in 2026.

FUTURE PLANS FOR CONTINUED ASSESSMENT

We have evaluated and modified the APA and ASES data in order to learn if it has some capacity to show differences. It does not. The instruments have been used for a total of 8 years, and have been deemed to have little usefulness: Sample sizes have declined since 2019 (n=117 current majors; n=32 a year average graduating from 2019-2022) and there have been no exit ASES results since 2017, and no APA results from graduating cohorts since 2019, as well as no tracking of these figures over the past four years. The department has determined that the settings in which the pre-test/post-test is delivered (Moodle) is not linked to curriculum nor graduation as an event, and the instruments have not been incorporated into exit-level courses (as was suggested in 2019). The faculty have considered how these exit-level courses might also be used to measure greater depth of exploration for a richer understanding of its our learning goals, particularly number 2 and found the best measure of engagement for Majors are the upper division methods courses. The Curriculum Committee has selected Advanced Writing in the Major courses to locate the exit survey instrument, and designing a capstone experience for 2023-24 linked to the introduction of a renovated general four-fields methods course (ANTY 401) that will be offered for the first time since 2019 in Autumn 2023. We also are quantifying applications of field-specific skill sets through a pilot assessment of two popular methods courses (ANTY 431 and 455) as selected exit-level courses, both Advanced Writing in the Major approved general education courses, in order to begin measuring learning goal number 3. Together with the introduction of ANTY 208, ANTY 401, and the capstone experience for all Majors, these two exit-level courses--along with other sub-field method specific courses (ANTY 412) are the most consequential ways to demonstrate significant achievement of the learning outcomes for the degree program in Anthropology going forward.

APPENDICIES

1. Updated Curriculum maps for Options (in order of graduates) FORE, ARCH, CULE, LING. (MEDI Option was taught out and discontinued this year).
2. Advanced Writing in the Major rubric and results of learning outcomes assessment: ANTY 430 (Autumn 2021, 2 sections; ANTY 431 (Spring 2019 and Spring 2022) and ANTY 455 (Spring 2022). Both 430 and 431 were taught both in person and online. Comparison was made between the two modes of delivery, as well as across the period of assessment (2019-2022).
3. Planned content knowledge assessment instruments, using previous APA content questions included in the new general education offering of ANTY 220S (X) taught Spring 2023, summer session 2023, both in person and online. This material is forthcoming.