

Summary of Internal and External Review Team Reports
Department of Anthropology
Fall 2006

The following summarizes the findings of the internal and external review teams that conducted reviews during the Fall semester of 2006.

Anthropology at SIUC is regarded as a premier program. The department is noted for its research and scholarly efforts in terms of productivity and quality. Both the undergraduate and graduate programs are highly regarded both internally and externally. The Anthropology faculty has excellent credentials and is productive researchers and teachers. One of the main strengths of Anthropology is that this is an academic unit with clear goals regarding its education and research mission. The main weaknesses of the department (e.g., cramped office spaces, aging lab facilities) are due to financial constraints rather than poor departmental management.

Undergraduate curriculum is well thought out. The unit does a good job of advising its undergraduate students and prepares them well to go on for the graduate studies. However, the curriculum does not have much diversity that can lead the undergraduates to different tracks.

It was recommended that:

- the issue of inadequate lab facilities and insufficient lab courses for the undergraduates need to be addressed.
- the department should consider establishing multiple (other than graduate school) tracks (e.g., those appealing to premed or science majors) for its undergraduates.
- the department should promote more interaction between the graduate and undergraduate students.
- the number of majors should be increased to at least 75 over the next two years with a review at that time of the impact on the students and program.
- "Introduction to Biological Anthropology (300A)" and "World Prehistory, (208) should be included in the University Core Curriculum.
- the department and the Dean develop a plan for staffing the Core Curriculum Course, Latino Cultures (204) within the department.
- CoLA advisors should be more knowledgeable about anthropology curriculum and there should be improvements in academic advising by them.

SIUC Anthropology graduate programs are recognized nationally for their quality and attract a cadre of high-quality, enthusiastic students. The most troubling issue is stipends (25%) for graduate assistants and the lack of office and/or desk space and access to phones. Students spoke of sharing desks on a rotating basis and of not having a place to have confidential meetings with students from the classes they were TA's for. Departmental resources outside of the normal working hours are not available to those graduate students who do not have TA/RA responsibilities.

It was recommended that:

- the department and the University examine the balance between finances and acceptances and consider making adjustments to support most of the graduate students at 50% level.

This is essential to attract and hold outstanding students and reduce the time to degree. It cannot continue to support the majority of its GA's on 25% assistantships.

- the issues of limited space and other resources available to the graduate students, whether or not on assistantship have to be addressed.
- the department should explore possible cooperative arrangements with other programs on the campus with GIS capabilities to access GIS and other software.
- there should be clearer guidelines for the content of M.A. thesis.
- efforts should be made to increase the enrollment and graduation of minority students.

The SIUC Anthropology Department has a reputation for excellence and high productivity in research that is truly impressive for a mid-sized unit. Departmental expectations with regards to research and scholarly activity are high and the faculty have met this challenge with enthusiasm.

It was recommended that:

- the University support 2-3 new sociocultural hires over the next some years to improve the balance among the four anthropological subdisciplines. This should include one person with an expertise in Latina/o issues who can staff the Latino Cultures course (204) noted above. The University must also replace any current line lost to retirement, tenure denial, or departure from the University.
- the department offer untenured faculty a full semester of release time from teaching.
- faculty travel support should be significantly increased from \$380 per person. It is absolutely needed for the productive faculty to present their work at pertinent meetings and will help in student recruitment and extramural funding.

Regarding university support and resources, major areas of concern are: (1) space for the graduate students and for teaching, research, seminars, conferences and thesis/dissertation presentations; (2) GA and civil service support; and (3) funds for other-than-salary (OTS) to cover the support for travel to the meetings, seminars, emergencies and other departmental activities. It was felt that University support to this unit should merely not be maintained but expanded.

- the University assess available space within Faner Hall and other campus buildings to determine if other space can be found to house some of the programmatic needs of the department. (External Review Team has certain suggestions that involve Center for Archaeological Investigation.)
- wherever necessary, structural repairs are made in the existing space to make it more usable. The expenses for this should not be borne by the department.
- the University should immediately provide additional OTS resources to the department and ensure that sustained, enhanced OTS funds will be made available.
- in light of the departmental need for funds for some additional operational flexibility, the current allocation of the overhead from outside grants between PIs (75%) and department (25%) should be reexamined.
- the possibility of finding funding for an upgrade in the existing civil service position should be explored.