

Undergraduate Academic Program Review

Name of Program: B.A. in Anthropology

Name and contact information for person completing the review:

Robert V. Riordan, Chair
Department of Sociology/Anthropology
270 Millett Hall 937-775-2667
robert.riordan@wright.edu

Indicate whether the program is

on campus
 online
 both

NCA Criterion 1 — — Mission and Integrity

NCA Criterion 2 — — Preparing for the Future

NCA Criterion 3 — — Student Learning and Effective Teaching

NCA Criterion 4 — — Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

NCA Criterion 5 — — Engagement and Service

I. Program Mission (NCA Criterion 1 and Criterion 5)

program mission statement (should identify constituency served) (1A, 1B)

The Mission of the Department of Anthropology is to provide a high quality baccalaureate program in Anthropology that exposes our students to the subfields of cultural anthropology, biological anthropology and archaeology and prepares them to advance upon graduation to either graduate schools or positions in government or business/industry. Quality teaching is reinforced by the participation of faculty in the advancement of anthropological knowledge and service to the University and the profession.

II. Program Description (NCA Criterion 2)

Brief history of Anthropology at Wright State University

The major in Anthropology was originally housed within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work at its origin in the late 1960s. In the late 1970s, Social Work was split off as a separate department and Anthropology is now within the Department of Sociology & Anthropology.

The Anthropology faculty has since the early 1970s always included at least one person whose specialty area is in cultural anthropology, archaeology, and biological (or physical) anthropology; between the early 1970s until 1982 there were four faculty, one of whose interests overlapped both archaeology and cultural anthropology. Between 1982-88 the biological anthropology courses

were taught by adjuncts. Since 1988 the number of full-time faculty has been three, but once again with a specialist representing each of the three subfields.

One of the Anthropology faculty members, Robert Riordan, served as the Department Chair between 1982-88; he serves again as Chair at present (since September, 1998).

Introductory courses in anthropology have always been part of the various iterations of the General Education program at Wright State. Currently, the Nonwestern Cultural Systems course (CST241) serves as the introductory course to cultural anthropology, and is taken by a wide group of students. The introductory courses in archaeology and biological anthropology can be taken to satisfy Area 6 in the current GE program.

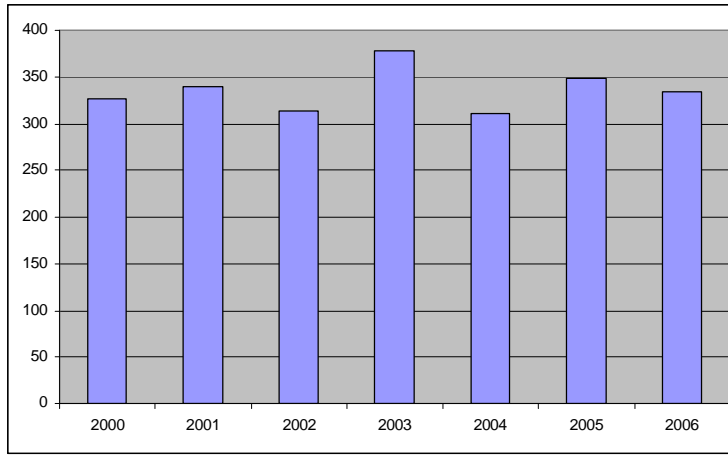
Student majors are required to take, in addition to the three introductory courses, upper division courses in all three subfield areas. This includes a minimum of three courses in cultural anthropology, three in archaeology, two in biological anthropology, plus three more upper division courses of their choice. The elective courses can be used to weight a student's preparation toward one particular subfield, if they wish. A major is also required to take one 400-level course in either cultural or archaeological theory.

There has been a minor in the program since the 1980s, and the option for exceptional students to pursue Departmental Honors at graduation through completion of an Honors research project since 1980. A number of graduates of the department have completed graduate degrees, including MAs and PhDs in Anthropology and other fields (History, Library Science, Medicine, Biostatistics, etc.). Two undergraduate anthropology majors have been named Presidential Scholars, an honor that is conferred upon only one student in the University each year, and those students completed their honors projects under two University Presidents (Kegerreis and Goldenberg). Many of our graduates are currently working in academic anthropology or in applied positions that are related directly or indirectly to their anthropology major, many of them having completed advanced degrees in anthropology or other fields.

Numbers of students served, majors, and minors:

Fig. 1. Number of students served

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During the 1970s-80s the number of anthropology majors was quite static, varying between about 15-25; since about 1990 the number increased to about 35; it dipped again in the early 2000s, but has since recovered.

Fig. 2. Number of anthropology majors

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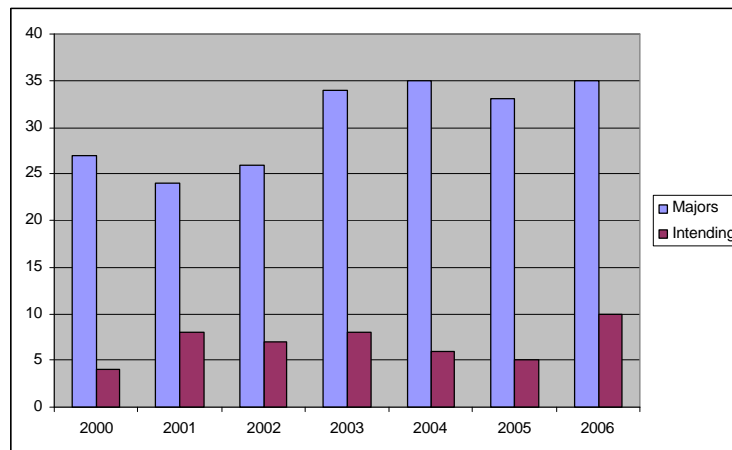


Fig. 3. Number of anthropology minors

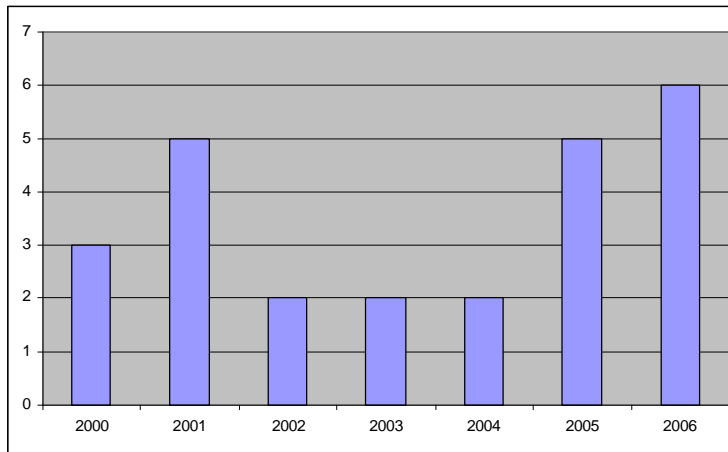
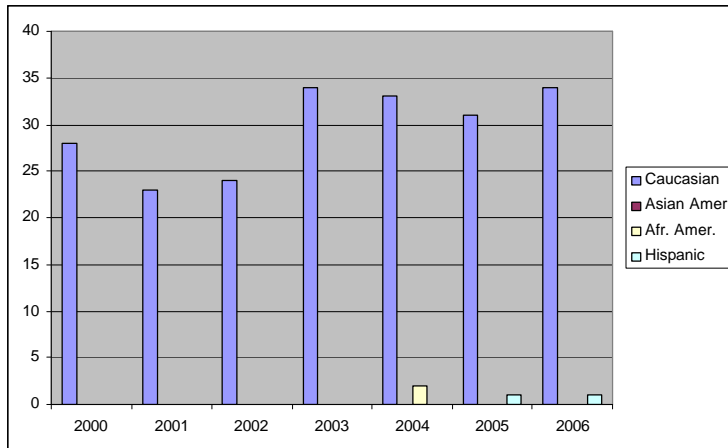


Fig. 4. Anthropology majors by ethnicity 2000-2006



Number and diversity of Faculty:

Since 1988 there have been three full-time (tenure track) anthropology faculty members including one Caucasian female, one Caucasian male, and an Asian male. In 1995 an Asian female was hired as an Instructor and was later promoted to Lecturer. In 2000 the Asian male retired and was replaced by the Asian female who had been a Lecturer. She voluntarily departed in 2006 and was replaced by a Caucasian male.

All adjuncts who have taught anthropology courses since 2000 have been European Americans.

Number of staff

In 2000-2002, the department employed two staff members. From mid-2002 to 2004 the department employed 1.5 staff members (one on a half-time basis). From 2004 to the present, the department has employed only 1 staff member. This person also services the ABS MA program that is housed in the department.

Student assistants are employed on a part-time basis, approximately 2-3 per quarter.

The three staff members over these years have been European American females.

Fig. 5. Number/race of full-time faculty

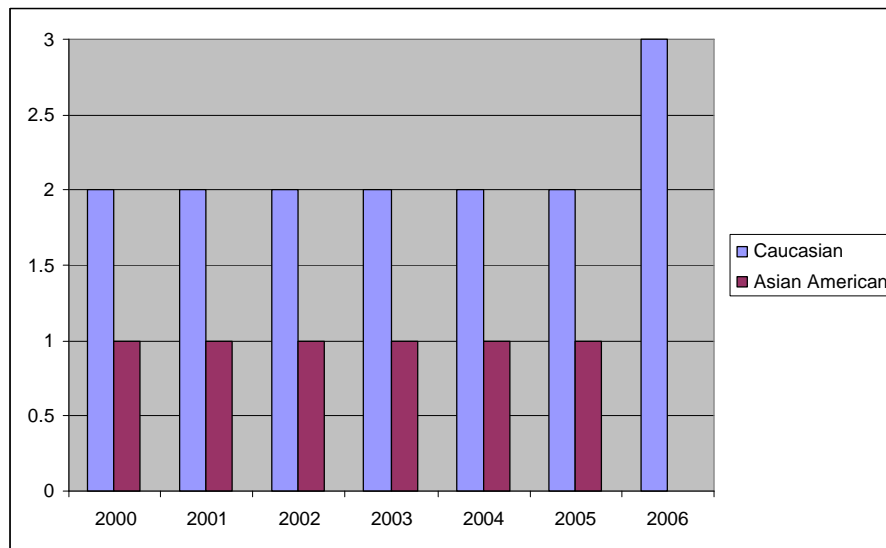
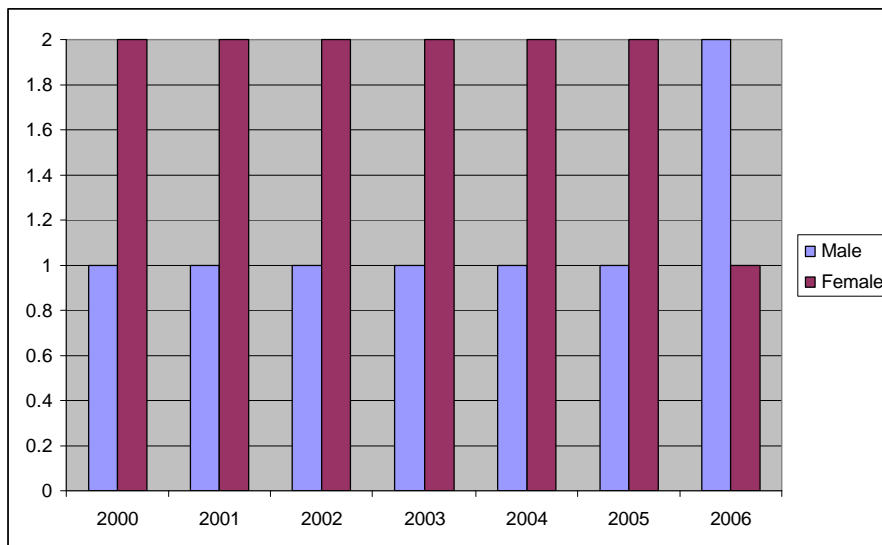


Fig. 6. Faculty



Budget

The department's operating budget has been quite flat during the past 15+ years, with the chart reflecting salary and benefit increases. The Anthropology and Sociology majors are housed within the same administrative unit (Department of Sociology & Anthropology), so the budget figures are for the unit and not specifically for the anthropology major.

Fig. 7. Department budget

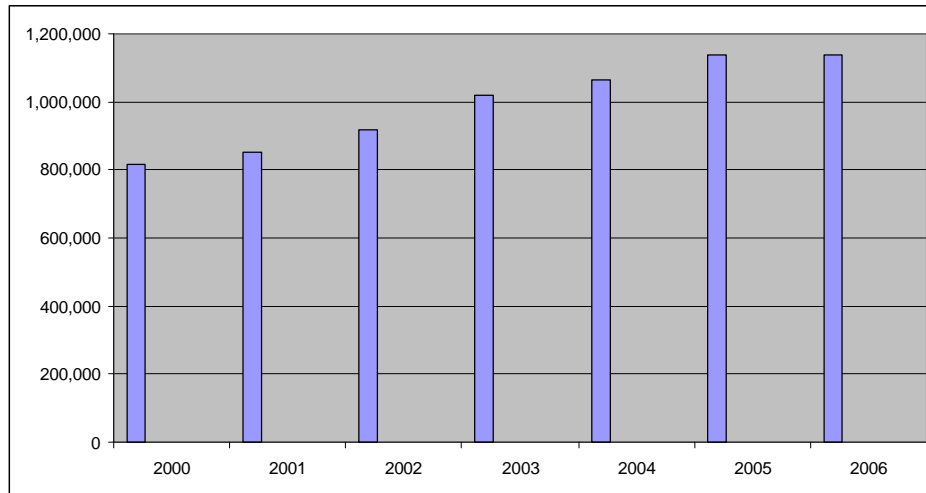
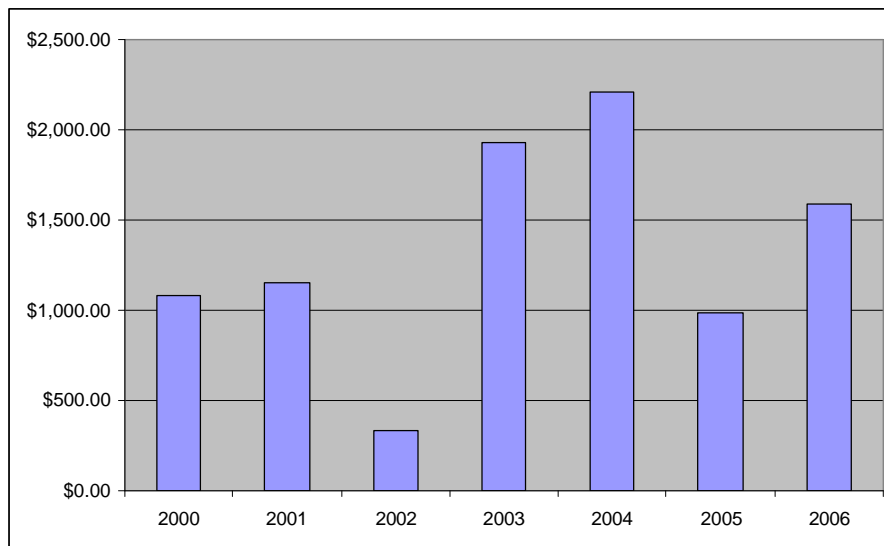


Fig. 8. Donations to the unrestricted department foundation fund are as follows:



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Facilities and equipment

Anthropology Department Computing Resources

Each full-time Anthropology department faculty has an office equipped with a phone, a PC or Macintosh computer and direct access to the campus network through a 10/100 Ethernet switch. Additional hardware including Zip drives, scanners, DVD drives, and wireless remotes, have been purchased and installed to fulfill the specific needs of individual faculty members. The Anthropology department office has additional equipment including a fax machine, a networked black & white laser printer, a scanner with OCR software that are also available for faculty to use, and a digital duplicating machine for large copying projects.

All faculty computers have the following software installed on them: Windows XP operating system with latest security patches and updates installed, Microsoft Office XP Professional software (Access, Excel, Front Page, PowerPoint, Word), Novell network client software, Hummingbird FTP and Telnet utility, CD/RW & DVD software, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and a local e-mail client. Additional statistical and research software such as SPSS 12, SAS 8.2, Mathematica 4, Visio, and Project are available for licensing and installation on faculty office computers.

Each Anthropology department faculty member is given a WSU Campus Computer Account. This account gives faculty unlimited internet access, 20MB Novell network file storage space, 30MB Unix file storage space consisting of a personal web directory and email storage space, access to Novell network file storage for use by instructors, and a Wright State email address. Faculty can use their account to access the internet and their Novell storage space from any computer connected to the campus network with the latest Novell client software installed. Additionally, faculty can access their personal Novell file storage space and WSU's web-based email system from any computer with a browser and internet access.

The Laboratory of Anthropology houses a collection of casts of hominid and human skeletal material and faunal skeletal materials. It also houses archaeological collections (artifacts, maps, reference collections of fauna and lithics) a library, and two outmoded computers. Archaeological excavation and surveying equipment (transit, alidade) is also housed there. Attempts to fund a total station for archaeological use and student training through the University capital equipment request process have been made three times, without success.

III. Program Effectiveness (NCA Criterion 3 and Criterion 4)

Achievement of student learning outcomes (Please summarize program assessment findings for past five years and subsequent improvements to program) (3A)

Prior to 2004, Outcomes assessed included:

1. a review of the curriculum, with the possibility of developing new courses for the anthropology curriculum
2. relevance of the anthropology coursework and degree to our graduates in their postgraduate positions

Outcome 1 was measured by faculty and alumni satisfaction with the curriculum, and the success in passing new course proposals through the approval process; outcome 2 was measured through alumni contacts and graduating student interviews.

Findings included the need to introduce new courses on ethnographic film and Latin American ethnology, both of which were subsequently added to the curriculum. Alumni suggestions concerning the addition of a course in forensic anthropology were not pursued because our existing personnel did not have the requisite training. Such a course was since offered in Fall, 2006 through employment of an adjunct from Ohio State. The responses of alumni were entirely positive concerning their feelings about the relevance of the curriculum to their employment, and no improvements were planned.

In 2004 a formal assessment plan was developed, and the following Learning Outcomes were defined for Anthropology, to be assessed on a two-year schedule:

1. Students will master an undergraduate level of knowledge concerning human origins, adaptive behavior, and biological diversity.
2. Students will master an undergraduate level of knowledge concerning the appearance and detection of archaeological sites.
3. Students will acquire a holistic and comparative perspective in analyzing the multiplicity of world cultures.
4. Students will be able to write coherent and substantive research papers and reports.

Outcomes 1,2 and 3 were assessed through the use of marker questions embedded in exams in selected courses, and exit interviews of graduating seniors which were done when graduation checks were performed. Outcome 4 was assessed through the collection of writing portfolios from graduating students.

Marker questions have been employed in all of the introductory courses and selected upper division courses. Sample findings include: 91% of students in

Introduction to Biological Anthropology could provide the scientific evidence for evolution by the end of the course; in two Introduction to Archaeology courses, 59% and 81% correctly answered questions dealing with damage to the US cultural heritage, a similar 59% and 81% correctly identified a landmark site that had been discovered, and 77% and 63% correctly identified the significance of the National Historic Preservation Act as it applies to archaeology. 100% of answers in an upper division class achieved mastery (evaluated as A and B graded responses) in an essay question concerning the operational application of field identification techniques to archaeological sites.

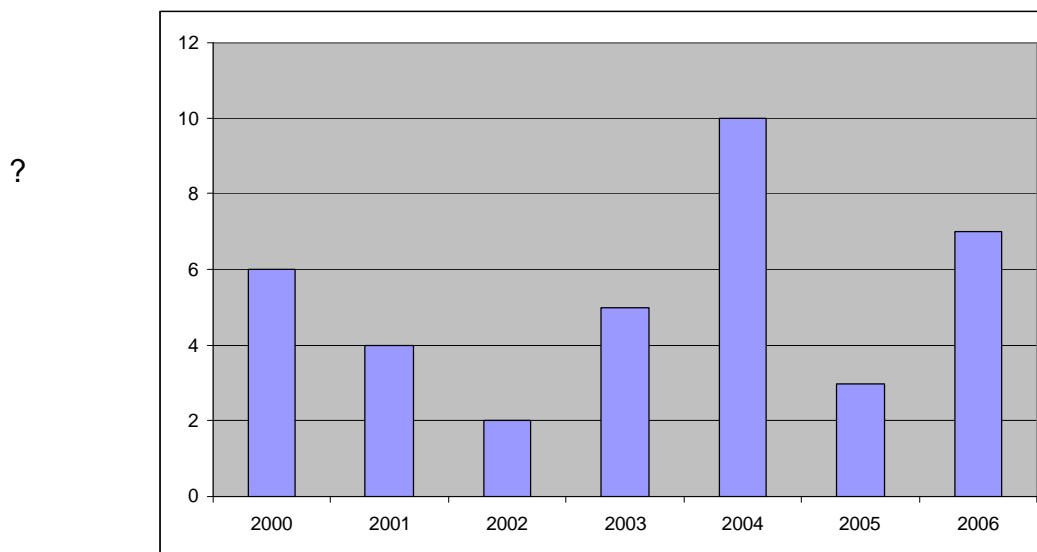
Outcome 4 involved a review of student portfolios. Using standardized forms, the faculty determined that on a 10-point scale, student grammatical ability averaged 7.9, the force and appropriateness of their arguments averaged 7.6, and suitable documentation averaged 7.1.

The faculty is using the findings by introducing more content into upper division courses concerning the proper documentation of sources in report writing. Instructors teaching introductory archaeology have been given the results, in an attempt to heighten the mastery level of their students.

Student retention rate (3A)

The department has not tracked the retention rate of its majors.

Fig. 9. Annual number of anthropology graduates (3A) (undergraduates)



Placement of graduates (e.g., employment, graduate study) (3A)

The department has not tracked the placement of its majors in the past 5 years, but has begun the process of tracking this data with the 2006-2007 academic year. Some examples of positions into which recent graduates from Anthropology have moved include: graduate student in M.A. in Humanities

program at Wright State, an archaeologist with Ohio's State Historic Preservation Office, archaeologists employed by the Ohio and Michigan Departments of Transportation, graduate students in the M.A. program in public history at Wright State, graduate students in anthropology at several universities (including the Univ. of Tennessee, Ohio State, South Florida, Univ. of Illinois, Cincinnati, Michigan State, Florida International, Washington State), archivist, veterinarian, soldier, Lutheran pastor, attorney, restaurant manager, assistant professor, computer systems manager for the Ohio Historical Society, the administrator of and a technician at General Dynamics Advanced Information Systems lab (WPAFB), U.S. postal carrier, curator of anthropology (Boonshoft Museum), Director of Collections for Dayton History, bookstore employee, and cultural resource management archaeologists.

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Teaching effectiveness (3B, 3D)

The university values teaching highly and requires student evaluation of faculty teaching. The department provides mentoring support for new faculty members and peer review of teaching of untenured professors by established (tenured) professors. Through the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the university offers many opportunities for improving teaching through seminars and workshops, and these are highly encouraged and supported in the department. Examples of CTL workshops attended by department faculty are those on Web Publishing: Dreamweaver, Turnitin.com (plagiarism software), the Electronic Classroom, Web Design, WebCt and Course Studio, and an Honors workshop. Faculty also attend university-sponsored conferences and workshops such as an annual conference on diversity and a Research and Sponsored Programs Workshop.

Faculty productivity (e.g., publications, grants) (4A)

Publications

Faculty productivity in the form of research and publications of that research are critical. The bylaws of sociology department emphasize the importance of this productivity in its promotion and tenure requirements and its annual evaluation criteria (see Appendix A).

Interrelations of program's teaching, research, service activities (3A-D, 4A-C, 5A-C)

All three anthropology faculty members bring their research activities into the classroom. A few examples include the following. Our cultural anthropologist has conducted fieldwork in Africa, and uses his experience to directly inform his teaching of several of his courses; he will be introducing a field methods course in cultural anthropology that is a direct outgrowth of his training and experience. The biological anthropologist is completing a book on obesity in America, the research for which finds direct use particularly in her Human Variation course as well as her introductory course. She also conducts research with apes at the Columbus Zoo, which aids her teaching of the Primate Behavior course and, again, her introductory course. The archaeologist has used students to help him

conduct cultural resource surveys ahead of modern construction projects that have the potential to adversely impact archaeological sites. He also conducts the annual Field School in Archaeology, which not only provides hands-on training in archaeological skills but also recovers collections of artifacts that students utilize in the lab course, and upon which some conduct analytical research projects in pursuit of departmental honors at graduation. The archaeologist also just completed two years as president of the Ohio Archaeological Council.

Integration of technology into curriculum and instruction (3C)

WSU faculty have been very fortunate that the university and college have supported technology well. The university was an early participant in supporting technology in the classroom, beginning with Astound almost 15 years ago. The university has had for some years an outstanding Center for Teaching and Learning and a department of Computer and Telecommunications Services, both of which work together to support faculty in the classroom. All classrooms have had computer equipment for several years. All faculty have access to learning and using web-assisted or online teaching programs (WebCT), including software for tests and plagiarism prevention, etc. All faculty have up-to-date computers. Students have easy access to computer laboratories and can connect from home to the university library.

Archaeological survey equipment is used in the Archaeological Field Methods class and the Field School, wherein students are trained in the making of topographic maps and archaeological site recording. The lab has 35mm film camera, digital cameras, and a DV recorder that are used to record archaeological fieldwork.

Description of how program ensures that it is always current (4C)

The Department's bylaws reward scholarly productivity in the annual merit review process. This ensures that the faculty members strive to obtain funding and write scholarly articles in areas related to their competency. Participation in regional, national and international conferences creates contacts with other professionals and acquaints the faculty with new research being done by colleagues elsewhere.

The archaeologist was professionally certified in 1999 by a new national body, the Register of Professional Archaeologists. He has also had the Field School in Archaeology certified by the RPA since that service was first offered five years ago.

“Comparative advantage” (e.g., distinctiveness in terms of students served, differentiation from programs offered at other regional institutions, strengths attributable to collaborative/interdisciplinary nature of program, etc.)

At Wright State the Lifespan Health Research Center, located within the School of Medicine, is staffed with numerous professionals whose degrees are in Anthropology. They include both cultural and biological anthropologists, and our biological anthropologist has an appointment there. It constitutes a resource that can be tapped for several of our courses, and a number of anthropology undergraduate students and graduates have worked there. The Substance Abuse program, also located in the School of Medicine (Community Health) includes staff with Ph.D. degrees in anthropology, including its director. This is another resource unavailable anywhere else in the region. The department's summer Field School in Archaeology has been offered consistently for over three decades, and is the only one to be regularly offered in this part of the state.

IV. Program Needs/Areas in Need of Improvement

Summarize the program needs (e.g., personnel, facilities, equipment) identified in this program review and the areas in need of improvement.

An area into which the anthropology faculty might expand through a new appointment is forensic anthropology. This is an area within biological anthropology that has potential applicability to both the anthropology major and also to the criminal justice major. Such a course has been offered twice since 2000 on an adjunct basis, using staff from WSU's Lifespan Health Research Center and a Ph.D. from Columbus.

The archaeology program needs updated surveying equipment, specifically a total station and related equipment and software to bring its training of students in line with current practice.

V. Proposed Improvement Action Plan

Summarize the actions that will be taken in response to the findings of this program assessment. Provide a timeline that indicates how these changes will be implemented and assessed over the next seven years.

As a small undergraduate program, Anthropology has been quite successful in turning out students who are well-prepared to function successfully in graduate programs. We would like to utilize some of these successful people to return to campus on a semi-regular basis to speak to our students about the process of applying to and succeeding in graduate school. Over 80% of the most recent graduating cohort, for example, contained students who intended to seek careers in anthropologically-related positions. We seek also to better document the employment status of our graduates.

We will continue to work with our best students to see that they attempt departmental honors projects. These have been important in the past in securing

our students good placements in graduate schools, and we hope to increase the number of those who opt to pursue them.

We will continue to make the case to the administration that a specialist in forensic anthropology would be useful to both the anthropology and the criminal justice majors.

An additional staff position, or even a half position, would help in the administration and smooth running of the department (not just the anthropology major). The present half position staff person who serves the criminal justice program has been helpful in this regard, but that position will move if the directorship of criminal justice moves away from sociology in the future.

Assessing the effectiveness of any changes to our major will require us to collect data beyond that which we are already in the habit of obtaining. More faculty time will have to be devoted to this.