

The Time is Now!
Overcoming Historic Challenges & Achieving Higher Impact

Programmatic Review of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Washington

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Executive Summary and Recommendation

The University of Washington Anthropology Department is relatively small in comparison to their peer R1 universities, but they are mighty. The 23 non-contingent faculty are each strong within their subfields: Archeology, Biological Anthropology and Sociocultural Anthropology. They are each nationally recognized with active research portfolios, prestigious awards, and national visibility. They also offer significant service and engagement across the UW campus, besides serving departmental needs for training and administration. This small group of non-contingent faculty, as well as contingent faculty, provide substantial training for BA and BS programs in Anthropology, four Master's degree programs, and three PhD programs. The undergraduate major track in Medical Anthropology and Global Health (MAGH) is wildly popular and includes 375 majors and contributes greatly to the overall size of the undergraduate program (540 majors, 50 minors). The graduate programs are of high quality, attract excellent students from across the nation and world, and are well-placed in their profession following their degrees. These accomplishments are remarkable, given several major challenges.

There are five sets of challenges. The first are deeply rooted divisions within the department that have long and well-known histories. The second are the highly siloed administrative structures created to avoid confrontations and continue to conduct business-as-usual. The third is a steady attrition of faculty (retirements or failed retentions), as well as failed searches. This has contributed to a very top-heavy department with over 50% of the faculty at the full professor rank. The fourth is the rapid growth of undergraduate majors placing stress on teaching loads. And the last are the perplexing inability to provide multi-year funding support for graduate students and siloed graduate training that limits professional development and undermines a coherent, productive departmental culture. These challenges were readily apparent in the review committee's preparatory materials and two days of meetings. Our Report's title - ***The Time is Now!*** - was made for these reasons. These challenges must be addressed immediately, or the department risks significantly diminished national stature.

Our Review Committee recommends continuing status for the academic programs within the UW Department of Anthropology. However, we have identified specific, critical concerns in the 10-year review that require more immediate attention. We are concerned with the long-term viability of the department's programs, given the preceding observations. We recommend an interim review and report within five years. In five years, we ask for the report to include responses and outcomes resulting from the following recommendations.

Our Review Committee strongly recommends that the university administration support a series of interventions that aims to overcome the department's scholarly siloes to create one, productive and intellectual community. This extremely practical approach can maintain the department's R1 reputation and continue to produce extremely well-trained graduate students AND it is scientifically and intellectually essential for sustaining a cutting-edge and vital faculty. These interventions must be pursued by both the department and the college administration, possibly including:

1. A 5-year plan for multiple strategic, mid-career faculty hires from diverse backgrounds with demonstrated ability to work across sub-disciplines and who can be departmental leaders.
2. Implement a series of interventions with outside guidance that centers every departmental members' humanity and life experiences as assets and worthy of support and encouragement.
3. Immediately implement transparency around four aspects of faculty life – (1) promotion criteria, (2) service and teaching loads, (3) explicit acknowledgement of extra burdens faced by black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), 1st gen, women, non-binary, and diverse faculty, and (4) explicate and implement better structures to support faculty without tenure (WOT) to minimize their sense of precarity and maximize their sense of belonging within the department.

4. Provide flexibility and empowerment to graduate students so that they are at the core of the department's intellectual life and a source of generative energy for a productive and cohesive scholarly department.
5. Implement intentional administrative management that seeks to grow staff capacities and communication, as well as build community among both staff and faculty.
6. Growing opportunities for undergraduate research experience and engagement, including greater involvement by graduate students in mentoring undergraduates.

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Background

The Department of Anthropology Review Committee included three local members (Marina Alberti, College of Built Environment; Sara Curran [Chair], Jackson School of International Studies and Department of Sociology; and Clarence Spigner, School of Public Health) and three external members (William Beeman, Stephen Mrozowski, and Joshua Snodgrass). The external committee members represented the three subdisciplines that organize programs and activities within the UW Department of Anthropology: Biocultural Anthropology (Snodgrass), Archeology (Mrozowski), and Cultural Anthropology (Beeman). Each of the three external members also brought to the Review Committee significant leadership experience as chairs of their respective departments or also as administrators with university-wide responsibilities. They understood well the challenges posed by the department's organizational structures and they also understood well the historical legacies of all three subfields with regards to colonialism, racism, and epistemologies. Each of the external members had helped their departments successfully navigate these treacherous divides.

The Review Committee received its charge on September 20, 2023 from the Graduate School's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs, and the Divisional Dean for Social Sciences. At the end of September, the Review Committee met via Zoom with University and Departmental representatives to discuss the purpose and plans for the upcoming review. Attending that meeting were Dean Andrea Woody (Divisional Dean of the Social Sciences), Kima Cargill (Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Graduate School), Sven Haakanson (Chair of Anthropology), and Becky Corriell (Director of Academic Program Review and Strategy), along with the external committee members and two of the internal members (Curran and Alberti).

It should be noted that this was the third attempt to constitute a review of the program. The first scheduled review would have taken place during the first October following the start of the pandemic (2020). Given the sensitive nature of the review and the historic challenges the department faces, there was a unanimous decision to postpone the review for a time when it could be held in-person, rather than via Zoom. The Graduate School rescheduled the review for the following year, in anticipation of the end of the pandemic. Since the pandemic continued through 2021-2022, the review was again postponed to the fall of 2022 in the hopes of a safe and productive in-person review. The Review Committee was reconstituted each time, although Curran remained the chair of the committee over the three years.

The Review Committee was provided with the department's self-study document (initially prepared for the 2020-21 review and then updated for the 2022-23 review); materials from prior programmatic reviews undertaken in 2010-11 and 2015-16; a University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office (UCIRO) Report from 2017; and a report authored by Taranath in 2017. The departmental site visit occurred on October 19 – 21, 2022. The committee met as a group on Wednesday evening, October 19, to discuss the approach to the following two days of meetings. On October 20, the meeting was launched with a program review and welcome from Ann Busche, followed by a discussion with the department's new chair Sven Haakanson (the Review Committee was not able to take a tour). The discussion with Haakanson immediately turned to the major challenges within the Department –

including longstanding acrimony among faculty, staffing shortages, and graduate student funding needs. The committee then met briefly with the Department's internal advisory committee.

The remainder of the day included meetings with groups by status of membership in the department: teaching and assistant professors, undergraduate students, associate professors, full professors, and jointly appointed faculty. The Review Committee adjourned for an hour and then reconvened for dinner and discussion. At the request of the Review Committee, just prior to our in-person meeting, an additional meeting with BIPOC faculty (black, indigenous, people of color) was added to our agenda for the start of our second day during our visit. This meeting was followed by breakfast with graduate students, a meeting with staff, one with academic services staff, and a meeting with the graduate program faculty coordinators from the three subdisciplines. The Review Committee also requested and added a last-minute meeting with the Divisional Dean of Social Sciences at noon on the second day. This was prompted by the growing cumulation, and consistent expression, of concerns from faculty at all ranks, staff, and graduate students. The Review Committee noted to the Divisional Dean the cumulation of concerns and that they did not reside with any 1 or 2 faculty but were articulated across all ranks and had impacted graduate student training. The Review Committee strongly encouraged the Dean to offer as many resources as possible to support the new chair of the department and to consider major interventions and investments for the department's future. The notable bright spot, and exception to the above, was the extremely positive expressions among the undergraduate students who indicated how their experiences and opportunities within the department had been extraordinary.

During our executive session, the Review Committee outlined the recommendations found below, prepared our plan for presenting our assessment, and how best to express our profound experience during the in-person review. The Review Committee's Exit Discussion with the chair and university administrators was blunt and clear about how the time is now to redress the longstanding problems or risk the demise of the department. Overcoming these historic challenges and achieving higher impact cannot only be accomplished by the new chair; it must be a collaborative endeavor with significant investments by the university administration. We have outlined in our executive summary and overview a series of manageable interventions and recommendations that can chart new directions to remake a more cohesive and coherent department which continues to produce cutting-edge research and trains the very best, future anthropologists.

In what follows, we provide an executive summary, an overview with detailed recommendations and then offer a comprehensive set of reports for each dimension of the department. First, the Review Committee greatly appreciated the department's self-report, which was very thorough and accurate. In this report, we did not seek to repeat the content found therein. Instead, we sought to draw out the highlights of the report and onsite visit. Second, the Review Committee's report was prepared in full consultation with all members of the committee. Primary authors of the report include Beeman, Curran, Mrozowski, and Snodgrass. The report represents our best collective assessment of the quality of the programs within the Department of Anthropology at the University of Washington.

Overview

The Review Committee found there is much to admire in the University of Washington Anthropology Department. The faculty is highly accomplished academically. Faculty members individually are intellectual leaders in their subfields. As a body they have an admirable record of research. Both undergraduate and graduate students praise their teaching and mentorship, and they render a great deal of service to the department, to the University, and to the discipline. Most of the faculty have joint appointments or affiliations throughout the University and thus serve larger constituencies than just their own department. Of note is the growth of a strong collaboration with the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, a development recommended in the departmental review of 2010. Additionally, the establishment of the Medical Anthropology and Global Health (MAGH) undergraduate major option and other expansion of departmental research focus in this area has widened the reach of the department to many other areas of the University resulting in increased collaboration and cross connection throughout the campus for both students and faculty.

Members of the faculty are held in high regard throughout the international anthropology community and among scholars in allied disciplines. Department graduate students have been successful in attracting grants and in obtaining meaningful employment, showing that mentorship from faculty members is strong. Likewise, undergraduates, both majors, and non-majors taking courses in the department have gone on to successful careers not only in academia, but in many other professions such as health and medicine, law, museum studies, public service, and business—a tribute to the excellent education they have received. Enrollments are very high in the department, with nearly 600 undergraduate majors—a figure that is high compared to other anthropology departments in the United States.

Despite these many admirable achievements, the faculty has experienced notable difficulties with internal collegial relations that affect the quality of the overall departmental program. Communication and personal interactions have been strained and have created an atmosphere that inhibits efficient and positive functioning. For some people, the divisiveness has led to a stressful and extreme uncomfortable work environment which is clearly having effects on the health and well-being of more than a handful of faculty and staff.

During our in-person visit there was considerable fatigue and discouragement expressed by faculty at all levels and across all three subdisciplines about these persistent challenges. Additionally, junior faculty (both assistant and associate) and contingent faculty expressed a great deal of concerns about the precarity of their positions and careers. Graduate students noted that the longstanding histories of acrimony across divisions and subdiscipline siloes were limiting their scholarly growth and their abilities to be thoughtful and adept members of faculties in other universities with similar sub-disciplinary programs, but where there are more functional relationships across those sub-disciplines. Granted, pandemic-related changes in responsibilities and interactions likely also had effects in further entrenching the divisions and exacerbating divisive behavior. The persistence of decades-long acrimony and divisions within the department were starkly apparent and very disturbing to the Review Committee during our in-person visit. The Review Committee, therefore, argues that the UW administration must immediately do all it can to repair and reinvigorate the UW Department of Anthropology so that it maintains its national status and integrity.

Throughout all meetings with faculty at every level or rank, we were left with a collective impression of anxiety, discouragement, exhaustion, and resignation. This impression was most starkly present among the senior faculty, where one would have expected the least of these expressions and certainly where there is the greatest freedom to enact new, gracious, and generous expressions around support and community building for the more junior faculty within the department. We suspect that a contributing

factor is the continued attrition of faculty over the last 10 years (the selective departure of senior faculty (who had provided significant leadership, but were worn down by the challenges within the department), as well as assistant and associate professors who might have provided new leadership, but were also discouraged by the inability of the department to overcome challenges) and the imminent departure (through retirement) of 2-3 others in the next few years. This has left a remaining group of senior faculty who have little energy to remake the department. During the 2010 review, there were 24 non-contingent faculty. There are now 23 non-contingent faculty in the department, more than half of whom are very senior faculty (12), 7 are Associate Professors (1 who may be close to retiring), and 2 are Assistant Professors, and 3 are Teaching Professors. There are additional, pending retirements on the horizon. The department is facing serious risks to its national reputation and its capacity to sustain a productive graduate training program, if it doesn't overcome the challenges that stem from the longstanding histories of divisiveness.

The Review Committee hopes that with good will and determined effort on the part of the faculty; with a new chair, potential new hires, and a change in the higher administration offices at the Dean and Provost levels; a salutary effect in changing the "chemistry" of the department in a positive direction can be created, allowing the considerable laudatory activities of the department to function harmoniously and efficiently in the future. The faculty seek to maintain their strong record with diminishing support, especially in terms of the faculty needed to keep up with their teaching and research demands. They openly requested help from our committee with providing better models or mechanisms to govern faculty hiring.

Consequently, the Review Committee suggests that long-standing epistemological commitments are standing in the way of change. We also suggest that the long-standing tradition of maintaining subfield administrative independence has contributed to a hardening of epistemological lines when it comes to hiring, multi-year graduate student recruitment packages, and potentially other departmental decisions. The arguments made in support of the current departmental structure were heard and they were compelling. It is true that biological anthropologists, sociocultural anthropologists, and archaeologists often go to separate annual conferences, but there are also conferences where all three subfields attend. And the committee notes that the current structure has proven successful in supporting a strong group of senior faculty in doing their jobs and doing them well. But they are aging out of the department and the strains placed on early career faculty were notable.

With such a strong tradition of anthropological research the Review Committee recommends that the department seek common ground in a shared commitment to anthropological research most broadly. The success of individual faculty often stems from the use of long-standing anthropological approaches which remain important. We recommend, however, that the department experiment with more cross-subfield activities as a way of rewarding their graduate students who are asking for this, and to improve their cross-subfield interaction. Most importantly we recommend that the senior faculty – who remain the leaders of the department – be open to change even if that change calls into question anthropology's long past, traditional sub-disciplinary boundaries, and the field's links to colonialism. The committee believes strongly that this is the future of the field and that the changes that accompany that future must build towards a more diverse faculty, cross-trained sub-disciplinarians, who are epistemologically respectful of other ways of knowing, other life experiences, and other histories. ***The time is now for overcoming the department's historic challenges and achieving higher impact!*** Our recommendations stem from the following proposed overarching recommendation that the university administration support a series of interventions that aims to overcome the department's scholarly siloes to create one, productive and intellectual community.

Departmental Reports: Quality Assessments of Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies, and Faculty

Undergraduate Programs

The Department of Anthropology has an outstanding undergraduate program. We had the opportunity to meet with undergraduate students during the review process and we were impressed by how articulate and sophisticated they were, and how enthusiastic they were about the training they received in the program. There were numerous examples in our conversations with the students of their appreciation for the inter-subfield synergies in the department in terms of teaching. That is, the students recognized the value of Anthropology as a holistic, integrative discipline that involves training across traditional anthropological subfields (Archaeology, Biological Anthropology, and Sociocultural Anthropology) and then how these subfield perspectives connected within specialty areas, such as the Medical Anthropology and Global Health (MAGH) program. From all indications, the MAGH program, in particular, is an exciting and popular program with students and the department should be commended for creating this innovative program that is attracting students in large numbers. Overall, the department has a large number of enrollees, with large and growing numbers of majors. One committee member noted that the Anthropology Department may have the largest number of undergraduate courses with multiple mentions of 'race', 'medicine', 'health', in the titles or course descriptions. This quality and quantity of undergraduate teaching is a major strength of the department and is an enormous benefit to the university. It is ironic that the department is not yet a place where its practices mirror its pedagogical arguments.

While we identified numerous strengths of Anthropology's undergraduate program, we also became aware of major challenges. The rapid growth in majors has created problems in staffing and support for students. This plays out in different ways and reaches from faculty to staff to graduate students:

- Given the volume of majors, the current faculty size creates problems in terms of having enough faculty to staff classes and to offer classes regularly and predictably.
- The large number of students also creates challenges in terms of office staff and advising, especially in the context of pandemic-driven disruptions to staffing and heightened student needs.
- The relatively small number of graduate students, in large part related to challenges with graduate student funding, leads to having fewer graduate student teaching assistants available to teach, support, mentor, and invest in undergraduates.

The undergraduate students we met repeatedly pointed to graduate students as important mentors, yet many noted that there were few available and that they generally didn't meet them until late in their undergraduate careers. It was also clear from our conversations that students are hungry for out of class research opportunities but that the limited number of graduate students and relatively small faculty size, coupled with the large size of the undergraduate program, severely limits the opportunities available to students. As the undergraduates are attending the University of Washington—a major research university—many have expectations that they will have access to research opportunities. This was clearly important to many of the Anthropology undergraduates, especially in the MAGH program, where many are looking to gain experience and leverage their undergraduate training to be competitive for graduate and professional schools. UW's Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium might be a place for undergraduates and graduate students might partner on research collaborations; however, several undergraduate students we met with felt that the Undergraduate Research Symposium was not accessible to them. Increased mentoring by faculty and graduate students could help undergraduate students feel welcome at the event and to be able to present their research.

Graduate Programs

The following review of graduate programs is organized around the questions the committee was charged with answering by the Graduate School and Divisional Dean, as well as by the department.

- Are the unit's degree programs of high quality? Do they meet the university's expectations of quality and reputation?

The graduate programs in the University of Washington Anthropology Department are of high quality. They are internationally recognized for their success at training professional researchers and scholars in anthropology based on active, ongoing research. The programs attract excellent students from throughout the nation and the world and are well regarded in the profession.

- How does the unit compare with that of peer and aspirational institutions in terms of educational programs and scholarship?

It is difficult in the field of anthropology to compare programs from institution to institution because each program has unique qualities and specializations, making strict "rankings" difficult. Suffice it to say that the University of Washington Department of Anthropology is recognized as a leading graduate program among R1 research universities.

The Department of Anthropology has three broad principal sub-disciplinary units: Sociocultural Anthropology, Archaeology, and Biological Anthropology. The usual "fourth field" in anthropology, Linguistics, is not represented in the Department's graduate program, though it is included in the offerings for the Department's undergraduate curriculum.

Within the three sub-disciplinary units represented in the Department there is nationally recognized strength in theoretical and methodological dimensions of Medical Anthropology and Global Health Sciences, Evolutionary Anthropology, and Gender Studies. Additionally, strong cooperation with the University's Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture adds a distinctive dimension to the graduate program with opportunities in museum studies for graduate students. Every faculty member has cross-Department appointments or research connections, enhancing the multi-disciplinary strength of graduate training.

The sub-disciplinary units of the Department are highly "siloes" in both their graduate student admissions and in their training of graduate students to the extent that in their own discourse, faculty members refer to these units as "Departments." This separation of sub-disciplines is not unusual on a national scale for anthropology. In fact, this division is so pronounced in some universities that the subdisciplines have been organized into separate academic units—actual institutionally separate Departments. That said, each unit ("Department") in the University of Washington Anthropology Department is of high quality. Each has both a solid, distinguished professional faculty and an accomplished group of graduate students. Moreover, the faculty members are largely in the most active years of their research, promising a sustained level of high institutional achievement going forward. Of the three sub-disciplinary units Cultural Anthropology has the largest number of faculty, but also has the largest number of contingent faculty who are principally engaged in undergraduate teaching and thus participate less in the graduate program. Counting only non-contingent faculty, the three units are of approximately the same size. The size of the Department has been reduced from earlier periods in its history, with approximately 21 tenured or tenure-track faculty, making it one of the smaller Department graduate programs among its peer R1 institutions. There is a clear correlation between Departmental

size and disciplinary reputation, and thus the reduction in faculty size can be seen as having been detrimental to the international reputational ranking of the Departmental graduate program.

- How can the unit improve the quality of its educational programs and scholarship?

Because the Department units are so separated from each other, each must stand on its own reputation. Graduate students in the committee's interviews, while expressing satisfaction with their own mentors, expressed a desire for closer interdisciplinary cooperation between the subdisciplinary units. Most of the graduate students come from undergraduate programs where they had an integrated subdisciplinary approach, and those interviewed felt that their professional futures would benefit from closer and more integrated Departmental training and professional activities such as seminars, workshops, and colloquia. There is ample inter-subdisciplinary interest in the areas for which the Department is especially known to facilitate this. One suggestion that arose from the Review Committee was to charge the graduate students in the Department with organizing inter-subdisciplinary activities with adequate financial support.

Although finances might seem to be an issue separate from academic quality, they are, in fact, interdependent. The Department does not currently offer multi-year financial support guarantees to the graduate students admitted. Multi-year support guarantees (typically five and increasingly six years) is now standard in the leading graduate programs in the United States, and the Review Committee strongly recommends that the Department implement this going forward, with the grandparenting of existing graduate students. The undergraduate enrollments in the Department have soared, creating sufficient demand for Teaching Assistantships to clearly make this feasible.

One prominent theme in this review process has been the still unresolved tensions in the Department over diversity issues among the faculty, which also transfers to concern among graduate students. These tensions manifest themselves in several ways. The demographic and faculty rank structure of the department is one factor. A large proportion of faculty members are full professors, by one account from the Dean's office, the largest proportion in the College. Younger faculty members as a group are more diverse, and they express feelings of precarity in their professional development within this atmosphere, which makes it difficult for them to spend time training graduate students, as they are worrying about their own career advancement. The sub-disciplinary siloes in the Department is another factor exacerbating these diversity tensions.

These Departmental tensions have a direct impact on the intellectual and professional quality of the Departmental graduate training program because graduate students are keenly aware of them, and this impacts their own sense of well-being in the program. Elsewhere in this report we have made suggestions for approaches to resolving these tensions. We appreciate that the Department has been living with this issue for years and has made significant efforts in the past to resolve these differences. However, we see that the situation has not significantly improved despite many attempts to alleviate tensions. Efforts to improve this situation should be redoubled in order to improve the overall quality of the Departmental program. We note that changes in Departmental leadership and potential new hiring may serve to change the "chemistry" in the Department.

- What does the unit need to do to increase its national prominence?

The aforementioned provision of guaranteed multi-year support, if implemented, will be beneficial in improving the Department's national prominence, for the direct reason that the Department will be able

to better compete for the best graduate students. Since a Department's reputation is largely dependent on the quality of its graduates, this would facilitate a great improvement in the prominence of the program, as well as relieving graduate students of the uncertainty of their future ability to continue and complete their program from year to year.

Tensions over diversity, sub-disciplinary divisions and siloes, and power differentials in faculty ranks in the Department are apparently widely known at the University of Washington and also within the anthropology profession. This works against the high scholarly reputation enjoyed by the faculty, the significant research being carried out in the Department, and the excellence of the graduates receiving their degrees. For this reason, it seems that all efforts to address these tensions would establish a clear path to improving the national prominence of the Department.

- To what extent is the unit preparing students at all levels for careers and future academic pursuits?

The graduate students in the Department are impressive both in their preparation as research scholars, and their fondness and dedication to teaching, since most of them are serving as teaching assistants and occasionally conducting their own courses (a practice that should be considered for expansion). Those we spoke to expressed gratitude and fondness toward their faculty mentors, in contrast to their discomfort with the structural tensions in the Department. Our overall impression was that despite difficulties, graduate students are being well trained as professionals within their sub-disciplines in anthropology.

- Question from the Anthropology Department: How do we maintain excellent graduate programs with declining faculty numbers and reduced financial assistance to graduate students?

The first question has to do with declining faculty numbers. This must be addressed in conjunction with the University of Washington administration. The second, regarding financial assistance for graduate students can be addressed at the Departmental level. Both questions are interrelated. Departmental finances for graduate programs in a research university depend on two sources of income. The first source is undergraduate enrollment and tuition. The second source is research grants and research funding. In the first regard the Department of Anthropology has made a spectacular effort at increasing undergraduate enrollment. The Department has one of the largest numbers of undergraduate majors of any major anthropology department in the nation. This is due in part to the success of the Medical Anthropology Global Health track within the major, which has proven to be extremely popular. The University administration has, in our opinion, not responded sufficiently to the success of this surge in undergraduate interest, which of course, translates to increased numbers of classes and increased class size. The need for additional Teaching Assistants and faculty to offer classes and train graduate students is clear in the numbers, and the University should be pressed to meet the need. We note that the Department has three active searches at present, and if successful, they will be beneficial for improving this situation, but additional faculty will still be needed to meet the overall demands of the program, including maintaining high levels of research and graduate training.

Though it was not a major topic of discussion during the visit of our Review Committee, increasing research funding for the Department through internal and external grants and partnerships will also make the need for additional faculty positions manifest, and might then yield increased graduate student support through the provision of Research Assistantships.

The question of guaranteed graduate student funding has been addressed above. But the Department right now clearly should have enough Teaching Assistant slots to make multi-year financing offers to incoming graduate students. ***The Review Committee sees no need to wait.*** The Department is capable right now of offering these guarantees. We are not sure what to attribute to the source of hesitation, because the resources are clearly available now, and other Departments within the College are doing this with even fewer resources or advantages than the Anthropology Department has. To reiterate, this can, we believe, be done immediately.

Faculty Quality & Research

When the committee met with the senior faculty – the full professors – one commented that there was no “dead wood” in the anthropology department. A review of faculty scholarly production supports that contention. The department is comprised of faculty who serve in numerous capacities. Some are more traditional faculty who are members of the tenured or tenure-track faculty. In addition to their teaching of both undergraduate and graduate level classes, these faculty are expected to engage in externally funded research as well as maintaining a full range of departmental, college and university service activities. The department also has several “teaching faculty” who are untenured but who are provided with some level of professional stability for teaching a heavy load of courses. There are also faculty who hold joint appointments or strong working relationships with the Burke Museum, The Jackson School of International Studies, The Center for Demography and Ecology, and the School of Public health. Some of the faculty are tenured members of the department of anthropology while others are in positions – in the school of public health for example - that are nontenured appointments. It speaks to the quality and hard-working character of this faculty that so many strong connections exist between the Anthropology Faculty and the University of Washington more broadly.

According to our count, the faculty consists of 11 full professors, 5 associate professors, 4 assistant professors, 2 teaching professors and 3 lecturers. This faculty size is smaller than would be expected relative to the large number of majors in the department, the number of students taking courses in the department, and the size of comparable departments at other R1 or major research universities. The faculty composition is heavily weighted toward full professors. The Review Committee was informed by the Office of the Dean that the proportion of full professors in the Department was the highest in the College of Arts and Sciences. This heavy weighting of full professors can lend stability to research and teaching programs, but it contributes, as will be noted below, to limiting the Department’s ability to meet current needs, and to achieve progress in institutional change.

A review of the faculty CV’s and summary information provided in the departmental review report leaves little question about the quality of the faculty and their overall scholarly production. The picture that emerges from the cumulative CV’s and summary report is of a robust department that has a strong record of success. The combined faculty – both teaching and research faculty – support a rich undergraduate major offering both BA’s and BS’s in anthropology as well as 4 Master’s degree tracks and PhD programs with specializations in archaeology, biological, and sociocultural anthropology. The popularity of the BA and BS undergraduate tracks including 375 in the Medical Anthropology and Global Health program, is just part of a department that serves more than 540 majors and 50 minors. This is a large number of majors for an anthropology department and speaks clearly to the commitment to teaching on the part of the departmental faculty. The new master’s program in Archaeological Heritage – new in 2021 – is to be applauded. It reflects well on the faculty that this need – heritage studies – is being addressed as part of a larger effort to diversify the faculty to meet the needs of the students the department serves. It also represents an effort on the part of the faculty to develop graduate tracks that crosscut the various subfields, something graduate students who the committee interviewed said would

be welcome. One of the most consistent points made by the graduate students was their desire for activities that brought the different faculty from the various subfields together.

The various faculty categories and differences in responsibility make for a rich faculty, but one that also faces challenges in terms of identity and status. Not surprisingly the deepest concerns were felt by the junior tenure-track faculty and the teaching faculty. As a group, the latter present a diversity of backgrounds and experiences at UW. This was particularly true of international faculty who faced a variety of challenges involving their immigration status, as well as their partners' statuses. These challenges are not uncommon in higher education and are not particular to the UW, but they nevertheless have an impact on the quality-of-life choices young faculty face. Other challenges involve differences in status and identity for the faculty without tenure. Taken as a whole, these differences of status contribute to instabilities which are endemic to most colleges and universities in the United States, but at UW they join with other factors to create tensions that are a major part of departmental difficulties.

For example, it should be noted that some senior faculty admitted that they had opposed the Heritage Master's program for decades. The committee made particular note of this admission because it might suggest that senior faculty resist change, change that the committee sees as critical because such change reflects new realities in the need for close collaboration with descendant communities. So, while we applaud the faculty for their willingness to consider change, we worry that resistance to change may be contributing to some of the larger interpersonal issues that continue to plague the department. It seems to the Review Committee that the Department of Anthropology should be **THE** place for overcoming these epistemological and historic divides.

Similarly, based on their own admission, faculty are open to hearing suggestions concerning their inability to conduct faculty searches that are both successful and not fraught with tension and conflict. We note, for example, that differences of opinion concerning the quality of faculty research has proven a barrier at times to hiring new faculty. Often these differences are characterized as epistemological. The committee understands that some genuinely see these differences of opinion – that often-eliciting stinging and sometimes personal responses – as epistemological. Yet, we also worry that commitment to certain epistemologies can stand in the way of change. The fact that archaeologists regularly collaborate with Indigenous community members was, for a long time, viewed as counter to scientific norms. Today, it is generally viewed as the future of archeology. We would suggest that an openness to other epistemologies and ontologies is critical to improving science and making it socially responsible.

In preparing their report the department used four basic metrics to measure the faculty scholarly productivity and impact. One of the more noteworthy measures is the large number of academic and community-based awards different faculty have received. In the same way that the number of peer-reviewed publications can be relied on to measure the quality of faculty scholarship, the same is true of awards the faculty have received. The range of awards is impressive including fellowships, book awards and prizes. The list of editorial boards on which departmental faculty serve is equally impressive, as is the list of high impact reports and publications the faculty have authored or co-authored. This group of publications is noteworthy for several reasons, but one point that stands out to the committee is how well it reflects the different strengths of the anthropology faculty, as a whole. Whether it is looking at human eco-dynamics as an intellectual framework, the spread of viruses, female genitalia mutilation or Neanderthal thorax, the faculty reaches a diverse audience.

Although the research focus of the department is understandably the Northwest Coast and the Circum-Pacific, there are also faculty who complement this by carrying out research around the globe. This type of traditional anthropological research is complemented by other work that addresses complex social issues that impact people's well-being. Many of these activities are captured in the "Consultancies and

Collaborations” subsection of the departmental report and they reflect an engaged faculty working to improve the lives of people in the greater Seattle area, the larger Indigenous populations of the Northwest Coast, as well the students of UW. The Research Families focus developed by Holly Barker is praiseworthy for its innovative approach to removing barriers to community-engaged research. The fact that this approach is growing at the Burke Museum is a good sign for the future in the minds of the committee. These kinds of initiatives are to be applauded and supported by the university because they are consistent with the larger mission of the UW to be an antiracist campus that serves the needs of a diverse student body and the larger community.

Another measure of the department’s strengths is their collective abilities to attract external and internal funding for their research and intellectual partnerships. The report notes that the faculty balance their research activities working closely with other UW units – CSDE, The Jackson School, and the Burke Museum – as well as maintaining individual research priorities. The result is an excellent record of externally funded research that, taken as a whole, has exceeded more than \$13 million over the past decade. The report also states that this figure does not include grants on which faculty were Co-PI’s or were administered through academic units outside the College of Arts and Sciences. This snapshot of externally and internally funded research provides a portrait of a faculty that plays an important role in the research activities of numerous units across the university. It is also a faculty who is sought after especially in instances, such as in the School of Public Health, where issues of social justice and environmental justice require a faculty well-versed in examining the intersection of social and biological forces. Members of the committee with backgrounds in anthropology appreciate this focus and applaud the departmental faculty for their commitment to interdisciplinary research.

Part of the strength of the department faculty is captured in its broader demographic profile – it is a department of largely, full professors. It is no coincidence that this large number of senior faculty contribute to the overall scholarly productivity of the department – again there is no dead wood among the faculty. It also seems the senior faculty play critical roles in their connections with other UW units. The latter require many skills beyond pure research skills. They require an openness to interdisciplinary collaboration that can prove challenging because of epistemological differences. This openness to collaboration is also evident among the small number of associate-level faculty of the department who also play important roles in other UW units.

At the departmental level the faculty commitment to interdisciplinarity provides one point of irony in the eyes of the committee. The strength of the three major intellectual tracks in sociocultural anthropology, biological anthropology, and archaeology is certainly aided by strong subfield administration – indeed much of the department’s internal structure is predicated on the need for administrative independence of the subfields. And it seems that there are positive dimensions to this departmental structure reflected in a highly productive faculty who are both committed teachers and researchers. The large number of externally and internally funded research also is due in large measure to the faculty’s ability to work across disciplines. Nevertheless, the expression of anxiety, discouragement, exhaustion, and resignation during our in-person group interviews was strikingly paradoxical.

Resources and Administrative Issues

It was notable that members of the faculty did not express concerns about Departmental resources as is often seen in departmental reviews in the experience of the Review Committee. However, there were concerns expressed by faculty and staff regarding specific issues.

The first concern involves lack of stable financial support for graduate students. This was listed as a major issue in the current Departmental self-study document, and was also expressed in the last Departmental review in 2010. This issue is addressed in other parts of this report, but the Review

Committee found it unusual for a department of this national stature to not be offering guaranteed multi-year financial support packages to prospective graduate students, commonly five-year guarantees at comparable R1 research universities. The high undergraduate enrollments for the Department clearly justify the offering of such packages supported by Teaching Assistant positions, and potentially Research Assistant positions supported by grants. Making such offers to prospective graduate students would increase the attractiveness of the Department for the highest quality graduate student applicants, would greatly improve Departmental morale, and would relieve the Department of one of the most prominent stated concerns in its self-study.

The second concern has to do with administrative allocation of salary and responsibilities for faculty with joint appointments, a situation that is extensive in the Department. As an example, faculty with Burke Museum as well as Departmental appointments face complications regarding calculation of salary and evaluation of performance. Jointly appointed museum faculty feel that community work necessary for public engagement is not being recognized adequately as part of professional responsibility assessment. One faculty member is making significant contribution to the medical anthropology curriculum through a joint appointment without tenure and is supported on a non-secure budgetary line. A Departmental review of such joint responsibilities would improve overall equity. As one of our committee members notes that the tenured, non-tenured, and without tenure distinctions are particularly sensitive issues for BIPOC faculty. Perceived inequities and retention will continue to plague departments at UW and the Department of Anthropology is not alone. However, it is crucial that the department practice more transparency around work assignments and routine acknowledgements (including through departmental practices) around the variable precarity of different tenure statuses.

As a footnote to these other concerns, teaching professors noted a lack of administrative support from the University in obtaining permanent residency status for international faculty, something that may be an issue experienced across the University. Nonetheless, the Review Committee recommends that departmental administrators double down on be better versed in managing expectations and helping to support those faculty as they manage those bureaucratic complexities.

Finally, in our interviews with the administrative staff, the siloed administration of programs and the challenges of managing a rapidly growing undergraduate major have strained administrative capacities. These are compounded by poor faculty – staff interactions and the multitude of program demands for each siloed sub-discipline. The staff expressed sincere desires to improve faculty-staff collaboration, streamline curricular programming and administration so as to ease staffing burdens, and improved communication and collaboration platforms for efficiency and productive outcomes.

Sub-disciplines

The Department is divided into three subdisciplines: Sociocultural, Biological and Archaeological. A fourth division common to anthropology departments in the United States, Linguistics, is subsumed under the Cultural rubric and is represented by one faculty member with cross-listed courses from other departments filling out the curriculum in this area. Counting faculty members with overlapping interests, there are 14 members who identify with Sociocultural Anthropology, 8 who identify with Biological Anthropology, and 7 who identify with Archaeological Anthropology. The preponderance of non-tenured faculty are associated with Sociocultural Anthropology.

The primary identification of the members of the faculty with one of these subdisciplines is very strong, to the point that the members of the faculty referred to each of these subdisciplines as “departments.” In our interviews with faculty members, we noted that the faculty members themselves described the department as heavily “siloed.”

Despite these areas of overlap, however, there are perceived ideological, methodological, and epistemological differences that have made intellectual interchange between members of the three sub-disciplines at the very least difficult and at most practically impossible. As noted earlier, the Review Committee is aware that these differences are common in many anthropology departments in the United States today, so the University of Washington department is not unique in this division of interests. However, many departments elsewhere have managed to mitigate these differences and create strong and supportive cooperation between sub-disciplines. At the University of Washington this problem has not been resolved. It is the opinion of the Review Committee that the consequences for not overcoming this challenge will relegate the department to subpar outcomes. The inability to overcome the divides has impacted not only intellectual work in the department, but also issues of hiring, tenure, and promotion. The Review Committee notes there are three faculty job searches currently underway and even before finalists in the searches have been chosen, trepidation about the potentially negative tenor of Departmental deliberations was widely expressed by members of the faculty.

Expressions of concern about Departmental tensions and communication difficulties in most aspects of faculty interaction universally arose in interviews by faculty members of every rank; by undergraduate and graduate students; and most notably and forcibly by Department administrative staff. A word frequently used was “toxic” in describing interpersonal communication. As an aside, other University faculty members outside the Department known to the Review Committee report awareness of these problems as well. These tensions are no secret to the University community at large. Perhaps as an artifact of these difficulties, two Anthropology faculty members have chosen to leave the Department for affiliations elsewhere in the University in recent years, and a third faculty member appears to have a similar transfer underway. Frankly, by the end of our in-person visit, the Review Committee felt exhausted by the atmosphere and palpable acrimony. We reported our own sense of exhaustion during the exit interview.

Notably, both graduate and undergraduate students indicated to the Review Committee that they fervently wish for an improved Departmental atmosphere, and that they wanted much more collaboration and interchange between the subdisciplines in the department. Undergraduates noted that they regularly enjoy taking courses across the sub-disciplinary curriculum, and many graduate students coming from undergraduate studies in schools with strong integrated sub-disciplinary approaches stated that they miss this “four-field” focus at the University of Washington.

Diversity Dynamics

In the Departmental review of 2010, the Department was urged to take serious measures to increase diversity in both the faculty and the graduate student population. In the intervening twelve years, examining the faculty roster, it is clear an effort has been made toward this end with hiring of talented young diverse faculty. However, the results for the overall composition of the faculty have been less than successful. Diversity in the faculty is largely in non-tenured and non-tenure-track ranks. Moreover, diversity efforts have not improved overall professional dynamics of internal communication, collaboration, and collegiality.

The Department has three BIPOC faculty who are tenured associate professors. Except for the current Department Chair, Professor Haakanson, who is Native American and full professor, other faculty members who may be seen as contributing to diversity are either non-tenured assistant professors or are non-tenure-track faculty. This creates a perceptual division in the Department where faculty stemming from diverse communities see themselves as relatively powerless, and at risk in the department, particularly in situations where sub-disciplinary differences relating to philosophical controversies in the conduct of the department arise. One of the other tenured BIPOC faculty member has made these concerns known publicly, sometimes forcefully, and this has created consternation in

Department dealings, even leading to the threat of legal action. It is noteworthy that the non-tenured minority faculty have expressed support for this faculty member's efforts to advocate for greater diversity and attention to the concerns of minority faculty and students.

It was obvious to the Review Committee that a structural problem lies at the heart of the collegial communication difficulties that the Department has been experiencing. The interdisciplinary differences that divide the Department are exacerbated by the structural composition of the Department, where high numbers of non-diverse tenured faculty, particularly full professors, are seen as threatening by the non-tenured faculty, some of whom, as noted, are from minority communities, and who had to overcome many social and academic challenges in their backgrounds to reach their current positions. These non-tenured faculty members expressed to the Review Committee that they often feel disempowered in the Department and hesitate to speak up during faculty meetings.

Conclusions and Detailed Recommendations

As our report has noted, there is much to celebrate about the Department of Anthropology. The undergraduate program is outstanding, graduate training has an excellent track record, and the faculty are extremely productive and nationally recognized in their fields. Individually, each faculty member is an outstanding contributor to new knowledge, university service and departmental administration. These successes have occurred despite the longstanding tensions. The administrative mechanisms the department has put in place to address the interdepartmental challenges, however, have only served to cement differences and create dysfunction, universally noted by all interviewed and in report materials.

Amelioration of the collegial difficulties faced by the faculty will fall on the shoulders of Professor Haakanson as current Chair, who appears to be well-regarded by the faculty. The Review Committee is hopeful that he will be able to engender better Departmental relations and draw on significant resource support from the Office of the Dean to successfully navigate this formidable task.

The faculty in the Department of Anthropology face many challenges. They seek to maintain their strong record with diminishing support, especially in terms of the faculty needed to keep up with their teaching and research demands. They openly requested help with providing better models or mechanisms to govern faculty hiring.

The Review Committee recognizes that the problems identified here are not new. They were already noted in the 2010 departmental review and have continued to be a recognized feature of departmental culture. Breaking away from an established pattern of social and collegial interaction is a difficult task for any institution, but for the department to continue to grow and thrive, fulfilling its research and educational mission, it will be necessary to redouble efforts to improve its collegial climate. The Review Committee believes that the senior faculty in the department have what it takes to make the Department of Anthropology whole again. The task of doing so cannot reside solely on the shoulders of the chair or leg work done solely by the graduate students or untenured faculty. The senior faculty must lean into this endeavor, attend all events, and provide the graceful leadership required to navigate troubled waters.

The Review Committee hopes that with good will and determined effort on the part of the faculty and college leadership that a salutary effect in changing the “chemistry” of the department in a positive direction can be created, allowing the considerable laudatory activities of the department to function harmoniously and efficiently in the future.

Consequently, the Review Committee suggests that long-standing epistemological commitments are standing in the way of change. We also suggest that the long-standing tradition of maintaining subfield administrative independence has contributed to a hardening of epistemological lines when it comes to hiring, multi-year graduate student recruitment packages, and potentially other departmental decisions. The arguments made in support of the current departmental structure were heard and they were compelling. It is true that biological anthropologists, sociocultural anthropologists, and archaeologists often go to separate annual conferences, but there are also conferences where all three subfields attend. And the committee notes that the current structure has proven successful in supporting a strong group of senior faculty in doing their jobs and doing them well. But they are aging out of the department and the strains placed on early career faculty were notable.

With such a strong tradition of anthropological research the Review Committee recommends that the department seek common ground in a shared commitment to anthropological research most broadly. The success of individual faculty often stems from the use of long-standing anthropological approaches which remain important. We recommend that the department experiment with more cross-subfield activities as a way of rewarding their graduate students who are asking for this, and to improve their

cross-subfield interaction. Most importantly we recommend that the senior faculty – who remain the leaders of the department – be open to change even if that change calls into question anthropology’s long past, traditional sub-disciplinary boundaries, and the field’s links to colonialism. The committee believes strongly that this is the future of the field and that the changes that accompany that future must build towards a more diverse faculty, cross-trained sub-disciplinarians, who are epistemologically respectful of other ways of knowing, other life experiences, and other histories.

Our Review Committee strongly recommends that the university administration support a series of interventions that aims to overcome the department’s scholarly siloes to create one, productive and intellectual community. Not only is this an extremely practical approach for maintaining the department’s R1 reputation and continuing to produce extremely well-trained graduate students, but it is scientifically and intellectually essential for sustaining a cutting-edge and vital faculty that can work together well, work effectively across the university, and reach beyond the university’s walls for higher impact. The Department may wish to consider several suggestions for courses of action to help improve the dysfunctional relations among faculty. We recommend the following:

- A 5-year plan for multiple strategic, mid-career faculty hires from diverse backgrounds with demonstrated ability to work across sub-disciplines and who can be departmental leaders.
- Implement a series of interventions with outside guidance that centers every departmental members’ humanity and life experiences as assets and worthy of support and encouragement.
 - Creating safe and open opportunities to learn life stories of faculty, students, and staff; trainings around implicit bias and overcoming implicit bias;
 - Promoting and reinstituting norms of behavior that bring humanity and respectfulness back to departmental interactions;
 - Routinely, regularly, and gracefully acknowledging just how hard it is to change academic cultures, advance professionally, and pursue ethically responsible, scholarly enterprises.
 - Creating an ombuds person or persons within the department to handle all staff and faculty concerns with those persons trained and capable of conflict resolution and ensuring safety in reporting.
 - Finally, following the above collective efforts, creatively reworking the undergraduate and graduate training programs and departmental structures to lower the siloed barriers currently dividing the department.
- Immediately implement transparency around four aspects of faculty life – (1) promotion criteria, (2) service and teaching loads, (3) explicit acknowledgement of extra burdens faced by BIPOC, 1st gen, women, non-binary, and diverse faculty, and (4) explicate and implement better structures to support faculty without tenure (WOT) to minimize their sense of precarity and maximize their sense of belonging within the department.
 - Providing publicly available promotion criteria for all ranks and faculty types, providing annual (even semi-annual) guidance and timelines for assistant and associate faculty, and focusing on mentoring and promoting current assistant and associate faculty.
 - Clarifying and making transparent service loads and accommodating junior faculty needs to teach and conduct research rather than service. Consider a transparent system of differentially weighting of teaching and service obligations and ensuring that the distributions of time and effort are distributed fairly and proportionately to ensure that early career faculty can effectively advance their careers at UW.
 - Being far more conscientious and explicit about how teaching and service demands for BIPOC, women, non-binary, and diverse faculty is usually more burdensome than for other faculty. First generation, BIPOC, diverse, and non-binary students reach out to them more often. Or, they can be confronted by students’ challenging them in the classroom more

- often. There is substantial evidence throughout academia that for these faculty they receive lower quantitative student evaluations and more negative comments in written evaluations. These are, but three of several, well-documented extra burdens for early career faculty from diverse backgrounds and with diverse identities. These demands can take an extra toll on a faculty member who seeks to do their very best. Think carefully about placing these faculty in roles that champion diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). While it might be of keen interest to place those faculty in such positions, it can also be a double disadvantage (tokenism and service burden), placing undue pressure on those faculty to carry the burden for the department in making forward progress in these domains.
- The department should do whatever it can to create supportive and transparent structures for faculty without tenure (WOT). The inherent instabilities associated with a WOT position fall disproportionately on BIPOC, women, first-generation, diverse, and non-binary faculty. Everything should be done within the department to hear their concerns and support their productive roles within the department.
 - All members of the Review Committee are willing to offer senior faculty more of their time if it would be helpful in deliberating on this report and in moving forward.
 - Provide flexibility and empowerment to graduate students so that they are at the core of the department's intellectual life and a source of generative energy for a productive and cohesive scholarly department.
 - Providing multi-year funding packages for all graduate students. Minimizing graduate student funding precarity, at least through 5 years of training.
 - Recognizing graduate student time is extremely constrained, especially in Seattle, due to long commutes and family responsibilities. Organize events that accommodate and support graduate capacities to engage in the intellectual life of the department and serve to animate the heart of the department.
 - Supporting a well-attended, well-funded colloquium organized by all graduate students (in all three domains) and with funding to invite scholars who can articulate intellectual programs that draw connections between the subdisciplines and how by doing so making such connections yields innovative research programs.
 - Reworking graduate programs to allow more breaching of siloes and cross-sub-discipline-training and research experiences.
 - Implement intentional administrative management that seeks to grow staff capacities and communication, as well as build community among both staff and faculty.
 - Growing opportunities for undergraduate research experience and engagement, including greater involvement by graduate students in mentoring undergraduates.