Progress Report

B.A. Sociology and Anthropology

College of Liberal Arts

November 2009

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

Date: __11/1/2009_____

Program: __ BA in Sociology/Anthropology _____
Degree and Title

Date of Last Review: __November 2008_____

Recommendation

Marshall University is obligated to recommend continuance or discontinuance of a program and to provide a brief rationale for the recommendation.

Recommendation
Code (#):

1. Continuation of the program at the current level of activity; or

2. Continuation of the program at a reduced level of activity or with **corrective action**: Corrective action will apply to programs that have deficiencies that the program itself can address and correct. **Progress report due by November 1 next academic year;** or

3. Continuation of the program with identification of the program for **resource development:** Resource development will apply to already viable programs that require additional resources from the Administration to help achieve their full potential. This designation is considered an investment in a viable program as opposed to addressing issues of a weak program. **Progress report due by November 1 next academic year**; or

4. Development of a cooperative program with another institution, or sharing of courses, facilities, faculty, and the like; or

5. Discontinuation of the program

Rationale for Recommendation: (Deans, please submit the rationale as a separate document. Beyond the College level, any office that disagrees with the previous recommendation must submit a separate rationale and append it to this document with appropriate signature.)

___1_____	__Anders Linde-Laursen and Fred Roth_____	__11/1/2009_____
Recommendation:	Signature of person preparing the report:	Date:
___1_____	__Anders Linde-Laursen_____	__11/1/2009_____
Recommendation:	Signature of Program Chair:	Date:
___1_____	__David J. Pittenger_____	__11/1/2009_____
Recommendation:	Signature of Academic Dean:	Date:
___1_____	___Tracy Christofero_____	__11/13/2009____
Recommendation:	Signature of Chair, Academic Planning Committee: (Baccalaureate pgms only)	Date:
___*1*____	___Camilla Brammer_____	__1/28/2010_____
Recommendation:	Signature of President, Faculty Senate/ Chair, Graduate Council:	Date:
_____	_____	_____
Recommendation:	Signature of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs:	Date:
_____	_____	_____
Recommendation:	Signature of the President:	Date:
_____	_____	_____
Recommendation:	Signature of Chair, Board of Governors:	Date:

The program review of the BA in Sociology and Anthropology, submitted in November 2008, resulted in a call for **continuation of the program with corrective action**. Comments from the dean, the review committee and the provost recognized that while the program contributes very significantly to the mission of the College of Liberal Arts and the university the department must revise and develop its curricula and it must create an assessment plan. The dean specifically requested that the progress report must demonstrate that the department has begun such processes in earnest. In this progress report we will, therefore, chronicle steps that have been taken since last November and the results that have been achieved and can be expected.

As it was noted in the program review, the department has over the past five years both experienced significant turnover in faculty and suffered from a lack of academic and administrative leadership. Consequently, a systematic review or development of the department's undergraduate curricula was lacking. In the program review report, the department recognized this problem and indicated that the hiring of a new chair and a full roster of faculty from fall 2008 was hoped to significantly and positively affect the situation.

As it was further discussed in the program review report, the department made little effort to assess program outcomes. Thus, the below outlined reorganization of our curricula is made mostly from what is considered good practices in the disciplines combined with innovative ideas from the faculty. We regard the reorganization of our curricula as the establishing of a strong structure for our program. On the grounds of future assessment, we will continue with developing single areas and classes to fill all parts of this structure with well developed and well delivered classes corresponding with the goals of the program and university.

Curriculum development

After concluding our work with producing the program review report in October last year, we immediately commenced working with our curricula. From the start, our undergraduate anthropology program seemed to be in most need of attention as its shortcomings were recognized to harm the recruitment of majors. In November/December, the anthropology faculty developed a plan that stressed the four-field approach in the program (archaeology, physical/biological anthropology, socio-cultural anthropology, and linguistics). The plan called for the approval of a number of new classes and changes to existing classes, the crosslisting of a few classes with other programs to take advantage of expertise in other departments and more effectively use the university's resources, and the systematic renumbering of all courses offered to facilitate advising and overall make the program comprehensible. A first step for the implementation of this plan was the establishing of a schedule for renumbering 300 and 400 level classes. The schedule highlighted the four fields of the discipline as well as left space for traditional disciplinary foci as regional (Appalachia) and area studies.

This schedule suggested a simple and strong structure that easily can be employed in years ahead to categorize and number new courses:

x00-09: to be used for the crosslisting of methods classes in other programs
x10-19: Appalachia
x20-29: Archaeology

x30-39: Physical-Biological Anthropology
x40-49: Area Studies
x50-69: Socio-Cultural Anthropology
x70-79: Linguistic Anthropology
x80-89: Special topics, independent study, internships
x90-99: Required seminars (including the capstone), honors

The chair of the department discussed this idea of restructuring the program with the dean of the college, the chairs of the curriculum committees, the registrar and the vice-president for academic affairs. While everyone supported the approach suggested, these discussions also unexpectedly revealed some significant discrepancies in available information about the program (student advising material, daily discourse among student, faculty and administrators, the printed undergraduate catalog, and existing, approved curriculum work; see attached addenda). The pivotal issue was that while the printed catalog described three majors in the department (a view supported by existing advising material), in reality only a degree program and two areas of emphasis formally existed.

To solve these issues it was decided to delete the two areas of emphasis ("applied" and "anthropology") and instead establish a strong undergraduate structure with separate majors in anthropology and sociology, which would also be in agreement with the already existing separate curricula in the two academic disciplines.

In January, the department submitted a comprehensive package of curriculum work that included:

- The renumbering of all ANT classes in agreement with the above mentioned schedule.
- The addition of a Junior Seminar focusing on the professional preparation of our students.
- The addition of a restructured program as a separate major in Anthropology and a separate major in Sociology under the existing degree program (the BA).
- The deletion of the existing areas of emphasis in the degree program.

In addition and in agreement with the plan a couple of new classes reflecting the academic development of the discipline and strength of the faculty were added to the curriculum. Likewise, two classes from the English program were crosslisted to support the teaching of linguistics, which is not a strength of department faculty.

With the approval and implementation of this package, the department met the academic year, 2009-2010, with a new, solid structure for its undergraduate program. The separate major in anthropology seems to be attractive to new majors and much easier to work with in advising. This year, anthropology is suggesting the crosslisting of a statistics class (SOC 345) and a GIS class (GEO 426). Additionally, we propose an elective internship in both anthropology and sociology, which we hope will both develop our students' professional skills and make the program and department more visible in the community. Additionally, we have worked with the new dean of the honors college, Dr. Mary Todd, to develop an option for our very best students to graduate with program honors through a comprehensive, independent study (six academic credits over one year; see attached addenda).

Steps to be taken this year include:

- The development of course rotations for faculty that will enable us to say when specific courses should be taught and the development of better advising materials.
- We are working with the dean's office to develop a new program brochure to attract new students.
- With the support of a work-study student we are also working to compose a comprehensive student handbook for enrolled majors; the handbook will present the curriculum in details and will include advice on when to take specific classes, general advice on career development, present the program faculty, etc.

The steps already taken and implemented as well as the steps planned for the 2009-2010 academic year together will frame what we imagine is a very attractive undergraduate anthropology program.

After the completion of the above mentioned curriculum package, including the implementation of a strong structure with independent majors in anthropology and sociology, we started last spring to discuss in detail possible improvements to the undergraduate program in sociology. With the addition of the same Junior Seminar with a focus on professional development, mentioned for anthropology above, consensus existed that the established major in sociology was not suffering from any fundamental problems. However, it was also agreed that some parts needed updating and, in particular, that an audit of existing electives and their organization was needed to ensure that undergraduate majors receive an educational experience with both depth and breadth. Over the past summer and the beginning of this fall, our undergraduate curriculum committee has been working with a plan for such an audit. In a meeting September 25, the department agreed in principle to the committee's suggestions and we are now forwarding curriculum work for the new major in sociology that includes:

A core including:
SOC 200 Introduction to Sociology
SOC 344 Social Research
SOC 345 Social Statistics
SOC 360 Sociological Perspectives
SOC 391 Junior Seminar
SOC 475 Senior Seminar (Capstone)

Additional requirements include that students take a minimum of three classes (including one topical core class) from one of four topical areas and a minimum of one class from two other topical areas to ensure depth and breadth:

A) Social Stratification and Social Diversity (topical core class *SOC 375: Social Stratification*)
B) Social Problems and Collective Behavior (topical core class *SOC 313: Contemporary Social Issues and Problems)*
C) Social Organization and Social Institutions (topical core class *SOC 300: Social Organization)*

D) Demography, Health and Human Environments (topical core class *SOC 401: Population and Human Ecology)*

In additional, we are proposing for our sociology program an internship as well as an honors option parallel with those mentioned above.

Logically, the implementation of this plan should be followed by the developing of a schedule for the renumbering of sociology classes which would stress this structure as well as be clarifying and facilitate advising. We are working on such a schedule which, however, is complicated by the way numbers are used, the 10 year quarantine imposed on deleted course numbers, and the fact that any changes must make sense both in the undergraduate program and in the MA program in Sociology where students ordinarily will be served by a number of 500 level classes that traditionally are numbered similarly to 400 level classes. We hope soon to have a schedule for this in place; however, since the deadline for curriculum work to be in effect from the following fall this year has been moved from mid-January to mid-October, we might have to use the existing course numbers one more year and then propose a stage two of this revision next year.

With the work already completed and the proposals summarized above, the department has demonstrated that we, as requested, are eagerly working with the development of our undergraduate curricula. The revisions have updated our undergraduate program, ensured that they are academically sound in both breadth and depth, and we expect they will make it easier to attract new majors as well as to advise the students we already have. The changes already implements are illustrated in the attached addenda. To summarize, the steps taken have:

- Established a strong structure for our undergraduate program with one independent major in anthropology and another in sociology, under the already existing degree program (the BA).
- Implemented a required Junior Seminar and optional internship that together will enhance the help students will receive with career planning and job seeking.
- Thoroughly reorganized the anthropology program with new requirements, the modernization of classes, the renumbering of course offerings, and the use of crosslisted classes to better use the university's resources and offer our students the best possible instruction in all fields.
- Reorganized the sociology program. The new structure will be implemented this year, while a more rational plan for the numbering of classes might have to wait until next year.
- Developed an option for our very best majors to end their undergraduate education with completing a one year independent study program that allows them to graduate with disciplinary honors.

Assessment
As mentioned above, we spent a lot of time and resources this past academic year researching existing curriculum work and fundamentally reorganizing our undergraduate offerings in anthropology as well as on discussing reasonable changes to our sociology major. While these discussions developed, it was premature to start discussing more than very fundamental aspects of an assessment plan. As our discussions of our curricula became more focused, a discussion of what to assess and how to do it became possible. However, we soon recognized that a solid foundation for such a discussion was needed if it was to be fruitful. After discussions between the department chair, the director of the Office of Assessment & Program Review and the dean, the chair proposed and the COLA dean approved that one of the members of the department's undergraduate curriculum committee would be granted a one class reassigned time in fall 2009 to work with the development of such a solid foundation.

Since late spring the selected faculty member, Associate Professor Fred Roth, has worked with gathering and organizing information as well as developing a proposal for an assessment plan. After being discussed in several department meetings and revisions made, the faculty approved in a meeting on September 25 a comprehensive sketch for a coming assessment plan (please see addendum: Assessment Plan for the Undergraduate Sociology Program). This plan proposes a number of educational goals to be assessed as well as identifies a number of required classes in the sociology major that lend themselves to such activities.

With the approval of this sketch, we have, as requested, demonstrated that we are in earnest working with the development of an assessment plan. We naturally recognize that more work from this sketch is needed before an assessment plan can be implemented. Important tasks ahead include: to develop tools for assessment in the identified classes and to "translate" the identified goals, selected classes and developed tools to include the anthropology side of our program. Fred Roth will continue his work with this over the coming months and it is our expectation that we will have the first assessment activities in agreement with our plan executed in spring 2010.

List of addenda
2008-2009 Undergraduate catalog
2008-2009 Undergraduate advising sheet (Sociology and Anthropology)
2009- 2010 Undergraduate catalog
2009-2010 Undergraduate advising sheet, Anthropology
2009-2010 Undergraduate advising sheet, Sociology
Approved proposal for disciplinary honors
Proposal for new undergraduate catalog text for Sociology
Assessment Plan for the Undergraduate Sociology Program