

Date: December 14, 2008

To:

Roberta Ferguson, Registrar

Christine Lewis, Librarian

David Pittenger, Dean, COLA

Del Chrol, Chair, COLA Curriculum Committee

Brian Morgan, Chair, University Curriculum Committee

Cam Brammer, Chair, Faculty Senate

Frances Hensley, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

From: Anders Linde-Laursen, Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

**Concerning: the approval of a major in Anthropology and the deletion of existing areas of emphasis in the Sociology degree program**

**Background:**

The existing undergraduate program in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology suffers from structural contradictions. The program probably made a lot of sense when it was constructed decades ago; however, as small changes have been made, parts have fallen out of use, new hires have been made, and theoretical and methodological interests have developed, we now work with a program that hampers adequate advising and course development, obstructs the advancement of a reasonable assessment program, and does not serve our students well. These issues are discussed in the five year review report the department submitted November 1, 2008. In comments to the review report from the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts as well as from the review committee, these problems are recognized and necessary improvements are prescribed. A report on accomplished improvements must be submitted by November 1, 2009.

Through the fall 2008, the faculty have discussed the mentioned issues, and we have also had conversations with the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts in this matter (see attached memo from Dean, Dr. David Pittenger). The faculty have found that by codifying what we already in fact are doing, rationalizing course-numbers, and adding a Junior Seminar, we can offer a very attractive undergraduate program within existing resources. Thus, what we are proposing are extensive corrective measures that will greatly enhance our program.

The attached proposal in its totality is the result of our conversations and asks for:

- 1) extensive updating of the numbering of ANT courses
- 2) the addition of a Junior Seminar (ANT/SOC 391) with a focus on professional preparation
- 3) the addition of an Anthropology major
- 4) the deletion of existing areas of emphasis in the Sociology major

**Item 1: extensive updating of the numbering of ANT courses**

This item only relates to anthropology classes (even if we expect later to suggest similar changes to the sociology program). Over the years classes with the ANT prefix have been numbered casually, resulting in a situation that is confusing to students and advisors. As an illustration: with the current numbers archaeology is taught as 322, 323, 324, 360, 370, and 461. On the list of offered courses in the catalog and in the schedule, classes in archaeology, consequently, are spread out. As a corrective measure, we propose to rationalize course numbers and gather in sequences courses with parallel foci; while this proposal results in many changes now, it creates an easy to use and clear structure for years to come.

The suggested sequencing of 300 and 400 level classes we have worked with looks like this:

x00-09: not in use  
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

Nick Freidin and Brian Hoey modernized a lot of the language in our course descriptions last year. Thus, while we propose a series of changes to course numbers, we only see a need for changing the catalog text for a single course (ANT 304). One class should have a changed title (ANT 461) to ensure correspondence between the full and abbreviated title used. Furthermore, as we are suggesting changing the number for ANT 370, which is crosslisted with CL 370, Classics requests to change the same number. All these changes are specified in the included forms.

**Item 2: the addition of a Junior Seminar (ANT/SOC 391) with a focus on professional preparation**

Many Marshall students are seemingly unaware of what they can do with their undergraduate college education. They have diffuse, sometimes highly unrealistic, expectations and in general lack a good understanding of how to apply for professional employment as well as graduate school. We propose to add a Junior Seminar to our department's curriculum to address such issues. The seminar (crosslisted as ANT 391/SOC 391) will help students to assess and develop their career interests and possibilities, help them write and revise résumés, CVs and letters of application, teach them how to deal with necessary approval processes in our academic disciplines (IRB), discuss with them their need for solidifying relations with faculty who can write them letters of recommendation, etc. This Junior Seminar is a required class in both the

proposed anthropology major and a proposed sociology major (see separate memo and material).

**Item 3: the addition of an Anthropology major**

Our current undergraduate degree program (sociology; identified in Banner as LS 10) has two areas of emphasis (applied sociology and anthropology, identified in Banner as LS 11 respectively LS 12). While we have one degree program, we have two totally separate curricula for sociology and anthropology. The curricular separation extends to two separate prefixes for classes (SOC and ANT). Only one sociology class, SOC 345, is currently a requirement for anthropology students and no other SOC classes are electives; students in sociology can count one ANT class towards 'social diversity'.

It can reasonably be argued that the current program structure is unfavorable to the wellbeing and development of Marshall's anthropology program. While students in anthropology take all their classes for their degree in ANT classes (with the exception of SOC 345), they receive a diploma that indicates that they major in sociology. This does not correspond with how the program is described in the current undergraduate catalog, which talks about "anthropology majors," it does not reflect how students, advisors, and faculty on a daily basis talk about the program as "the anthropology major," and, most importantly, it does not serve our students well when they look for jobs or graduate schools as they need to explain that they are, in fact, graduating with an anthropology major, even if their transcript and diploma state otherwise. Additionally, this existing structure hampers the development of a reasonable assessment plan in the department as anthropology and sociology must be assessed according to somewhat different criteria.

**Proposal 1:** As a corrective measure, we propose to solve these contradictions by **adding an anthropology major** to our undergraduate program. Besides solving the above mentioned problems, this will also permit interested students to double major in sociology and anthropology and have both mentioned as equals on their transcript and diploma.

This solution is **cost-neutral** in relation to the current situation as it codifies what we in reality already practice. It will be demonstrated in the attached lists that:

- addendum A: the proposed major can be accomplished within the 128 credits of an undergraduate program (including all Marshall plan and college requirements)
- addendum B: the existing faculty in the department offer an adequate number of classes to satisfy all core and elective courses requirements
- addendum C: the courses offered by the existing faculty allow for a great deal of flexibility for students to satisfy core as well as elective requirements in agreement with their individual interests.

**Proposal 2:** While adding a major in anthropology, we have reviewed and revised also the existing minor in anthropology. The minor has been extended from 12 to 15 credits and some classes are now required.

**Item 4: the deletion of existing areas of emphasis in the Sociology program**

**Proposal 1:** With the addition of an independent anthropology major (item 3), the area of emphasis in anthropology (LS 12) in the existing sociology program should, naturally, be deleted.

However, we want to go one step further and delete also the other existing area of emphasis, 'applied sociology' (LS 11). This area of emphasis currently only enrolls one student as all other sociology students are enrolled in sociology (LS 10). The total difference between LS 10 and LS 11 is the added requirement of one out of four classes for the 'applied' area of emphasis (and all these four classes function also as electives for LS 10). The faculty have discussed this situation and are in agreement that upholding the 'applied sociology' area of emphasis under the current circumstances is not practical. We would need to hire additional faculty with an applied focus who could revive and restructure the area of emphasis and teach the needed courses. While the faculty are in agreement that applied research is important and that possibilities for counting applied work towards the requirements in the sociology major must exist, we suggest the deletion of the 'applied sociology' area of emphasis for which there is currently no resources, nor, as it seems, any student interest. This solution will be far easier in terms of advising, course scheduling and working with establishing both a coherent and rich curriculum in sociology and a reasonable assessment plan.

**Proposal 2:** as a corrective measure, we suggest the deletion of the 'applied sociology' area of emphasis (LS 11) in the sociology major (LS 10). New students wanting to major in Sociology should, consequently, be enrolled in LS 10.

This proposal does not change anything from what is current practice. In reality all current sociology students – minus one – are enrolled in LS 10, we schedule classes with the aim to satisfy students enrolled in LS 10, if no other request is made advising enrolls students in LS 10, etc. As this change codifies what we already practice and does not make any changes what so ever to the existing sociology curriculum, it is completely **cost neutral**.