

## **ASSESSMENT REPORT 2016-2017**

**Southwest Studies: Anthropology**  
(Instructional Degree Program)

**M.A.**  
(Degree Level)

### **Program Mission:**

The mission of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice is to: a) contribute, meeting the educational and research needs in sociology, anthropology and criminal justice and b): contribute to meeting the career needs in social services and social sciences, as well as contribute to training for careers in education, engineering, physical and biological sciences, medicine, and other science fields.

### **Student Learning Outcome 1:**

Declarative Knowledge: Students are expected to demonstrate facts, definitions, and vocabulary in anthropology. In addition, students should demonstrate knowledge in the interdisciplinary contributions to the Greater Southwest and northern New Mexico, including knowledge of the pre-Columbian and contemporary cultures and peoples; knowledge in one or more of the anthropological sub-disciplines; and, knowledge in one or more research areas within the Greater Southwest and northern New Mexico.

### **NMHU Traits**

- 1) Mastery of content knowledge and skills
- 2) Effective communication skills
- 3) Critical and reflective thinking skills
- 4) Effective use of technology

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 1**

- 1) Mastery of content knowledge and skills
- 2) Critical and reflective thinking skills

### **First Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:**

The successful completion of the Southwest Studies common core, requirements in the concentration, and elective courses with a cumulative Grade Point Average of at least 3.0. This will ensure that students have an academic and practical understanding and appreciation of the unique social and cultural heritage of the Greater Southwest, and its composite past and present. Classes evaluated include Development and Socio-cultural Anthropology (ANTH 515) and Forensic Anthropology (ANTH 542).

Number of Students Meeting Criterion	7	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion	1
Total Number of Students Assessed	8	Total Number of Students Meeting Criterion	88%

**Interpretations Based on Results of Outcome 1:**

All students displayed mastery of content, including critical and reflective awareness of the unique social and cultural heritage of the Greater Southwest. A total of 88% of the students met the criterion of Outcome 1.

**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2**

- 1) Mastery of content knowledge and skills
- 2) Critical and reflective thinking skills

**Student Learning Outcome 2:**

Intellectual Skills: Students are expected demonstrate knowledge on concepts, theories, rules and procedures needed for problem solving in anthropology. These skills include the ability to understand and critique development in anthropological theory and methodology and the ability to conceive of, design, and conduct research on anthropological subjects.

**First Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:**

Scholarly activity judged from an annual listing of students who publish in professional journals, books, edited collections and/or present papers at professional conferences.

Number of Students Meeting Criterion	2	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion	0
Total Number of Students Assessed	2	Total Number of Students Meeting Criterion	100%

**Interpretations Based on Results of Outcome 2:**

Students who presented their works in professional conference made up 100% of the total number of students meeting the criterion. We will encourage more student participation in professional conferences either through NMHU scholarly events or other professional venues.

**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 3**

- 1) Mastery of content knowledge and skills
- 2) Effective communication skills
- 3) Critical and reflective thinking skills

#### 4) Effective use of technology

##### **Student Learning Outcome 3:**

Attitudes: Students are expected to learn and promote cross-cultural awareness, understanding, and appreciation of diverse lifestyles. Additionally, students are expected to subscribe to and practice according to the ethical codes of anthropology.

##### **First Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:**

Class participation and faculty evaluation of in-class discussions of cross-cultural appreciation and awareness will assess the extent to which cross-cultural awareness, understanding, appreciation of diverse lifestyles, and ethical codes of anthropology were increased.

Number of Students Meeting Criterion	7	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion	0
Total Number of Students Assessed	8	Total Number of Students Meeting Criterion	88%

##### **Interpretations Based on Results of Outcome 3:**

A total of 88% of the students met the criterion of cross-cultural appreciation and awareness and the understanding of diverse lifestyles and ethical codes of anthropology.

##### **Utilization of Results:**

Based on the results of the assessment, several conclusions can be drawn. One is the success of the program to train graduate students to the expectations found within our graduate program. Students uniformly master an assortment of skills that ready them for the rigors of the MA program. This is also helpful in assessing how to best ready our graduate students for work outside of the university.

The results also tell us that our students reach a level of understanding expected from a graduate student in anthropology within the two-year time frame found in most graduate studies programs.

There has been some discussion in 'speeding-up' the process of obtaining their degrees to best fit within student career goals. The data reflects the potential for this future alteration of our program

##### **Changes to Program Based on Results:**

The results of the assessment allow us to consider several ways to improve the program for our graduate students:

- 1) Provide more options for students to concentrate the classroom portion of their studies to the first year, leaving more time in their second year of studies for the development of research skills toward fulfilling a successful completion of their thesis projects.

- 2) Explore the possibility of having a non-thesis option for students who may gravitate toward smaller research projects rather than the large thesis based project.
- 3) To integrate our students into local community efforts at preserving cultural and historical knowledge. Although the assessment veers toward internal outcomes, it also reveals the importance of preparational for external outcomes. Presentations at conferences for example allows for the dissemination of research results. These results also need to be shared with the local communities NMHU serves and represents.

### **Retention Strategies:**

Assessment of our program will enable us to ensure that students stay within the program and finish their degree within a reasonable timeframe. Some of the retention strategies that emerge out of learning outcomes results include:

- 1) Developing outcomes that measure research acquisition, data collection and developing writing skills needed for the rigors of a thesis.
- 2) Ensuring that students are meeting regularly with their graduate advisors, developing relationships centered around mentoring and advising.
- 3) Developing plans, schedules and timetables with graduate students and ensuring that research and academic goals are met.
- 4) Ensuring that by their second year of studies graduate students have developed their research proposals and are taking the course needed to meet the expectations of completing their graduate degrees.