

**Course Assessment Report**  
**Washtenaw Community College**

Discipline	Course Number	Title
Anthropology	202	ANT 202 10/28/2016- Introduction to Physical Anthropology
Division	Department	Faculty Preparer
Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences	Social Science	Christopher Barrett
Date of Last Filed Assessment Report		

**I. Assessment Results per Student Learning Outcome**

Outcome 1: The student will be able to employ evolutionary theory and the tools of physical anthropology to critically evaluate models of human evolution and adaptation in current and past environments.

- Assessment Plan
  - Assessment Tool: Department evaluated post-test examination.
  - Assessment Date: Winter 2010
  - Course section(s)/other population: 1 section
  - Number students to be assessed: 30
  - How the assessment will be scored: The multiple choice questions will be scored using an answer key. The essay question will be scored using a departmentally developed rubric.
  - Standard of success to be used for this assessment: Since these are basic knowledge/comprehension questions, an overall average score of 75% or higher on the post-test and will be required to indicate a successful performance of the course.
  - Who will score and analyze the data: The objective section of the post-test will be scored by anthropology faculty members other than the instructor who administered the course. Brief essay will be scored using a rubric.

1. Indicate the Semester(s) and year(s) assessment data were collected for this report.

Fall (indicate years below)	Winter (indicate years below)	SP/SU (indicate years below)
2015		

2. Provide assessment sample size data in the table below.

# of students enrolled	# of students assessed
21	20

3. If the number of students assessed differs from the number of students enrolled, please explain why all enrolled students were not assessed, e.g. absence, withdrawal, or did not complete activity.

One student who was enrolled in the course did not take the exam.

4. Describe how students from all populations (day students on campus, DL, MM, evening, extension center sites, etc.) were included in the assessment based on your selection criteria.

All students enrolled for ANT 202 in FA15 were assessed.

5. Describe the process used to assess this outcome. Include a brief description of this tool and how it was scored.

Assessment was based on a 50-question multiple-choice exam (Exam III) and an essay question (Essay III). The essay question was completed as extra credit following the multiple-choice exam. Both the multiple-choice exam questions and the essay questions were developed in collaboration with another Anthropology instructor. An answer key was used to score the multiple-choice exam. A rubric (also developed in collaboration with an Anthropology instructor from the Social Sciences department) was used to score the essay. All essay questions were scored by an Anthropology instructor from the Social Sciences department, other than the instructor of the FA15 section.

6. Briefly describe assessment results based on data collected for this outcome and tool during the course assessment. Discuss the extent to which students achieved this learning outcome and indicate whether the standard of success was met for this outcome and tool.

Met Standard of Success: No

The average score on multiple choice Exam III was 69.9%. For 12 out of the 50 questions on the exam the percentage of students answering these questions incorrectly exceeded 65%. With the exception of one questions, all of these questions tested student ability to identify species and archaeological sites. Questions on the exam that addressed theory and method had low rates (less than 50%) for incorrect answers.

The average score on the Essay III question was a 7.525 out of 10 points, or a 75.25%. The question had two parts; the first part required students to discuss theories for the emergence of bipedalism in prehistory, the second part asked

students to explain the relationship between environment, bipedalism, and tool use. Students generally did much better on the first part of the essay than on the second part.

7. Based on your interpretation of the assessment results, describe the areas of strength in student achievement of this learning outcome.

Based upon the multiple-choice exams and essay questions, students understood the basics of genetics, heredity, evolutionary theory and method, and biocultural evolution. Students were less successful in correctly identifying specific evidence that supports conclusions regarding human evolution. 12 questions from Exam III were answered incorrectly by 65% or more of the students enrolled in the course. With one exception, all of these questions asked students to identify specific archaeological sites or hominin species. These results were similar to those of Essay III; while almost all students correctly explained at least two theories for the emergence of bipedalism, many students could not identify the specific archaeological and fossil evidence which supports these conclusions.

8. Based on your analysis of student performance, discuss the areas in which student achievement of this learning outcome could be improved. If student met standard of success, you may wish to identify your plans for continuous improvement.

It is clear that students understand the "big picture" (i.e. theory and method) but are having difficulty integrating the actual archaeological evidence with these explanations for hominin evolution. My current strategy for the class has been to present the archaeological / fossil evidence first and then explain how it has been used to address questions about our evolutionary past. This is a "bottom-up" approach; it may be more beneficial to start with a discussion of theory (and method), and then show how the fossil evidence either supports or refutes these conclusions. It may also be beneficial to break-up the section of the course that deals with hominin species into two or more sections so that additional time might be devoted to demonstrating how the fossil evidence has been used to "test" questions about human evolution.

Outcome 2: The student will be able to apply physical anthropology concepts and methods to assess the problems and promises of the paleoanthropological record for explaining the emergence of humankind.

- Assessment Plan
  - Assessment Tool: Department evaluated post-test examination.
  - Assessment Date: Winter 2010
  - Course section(s)/other population: 1 section

- Number students to be assessed: 30
- How the assessment will be scored: The multiple choice questions will be scored using an answer key. The essay question will be scored using a departmentally developed rubric.
- Standard of success to be used for this assessment: Since these are basic knowledge/comprehension questions, an overall average score of 75% or higher on the post-test and will be required to indicate a successful performance of the course.
- Who will score and analyze the data: The objective section of the post-test will be scored by anthropology faculty members other than the instructor who administered the course. Brief essay will be scored using a rubric.

1. Indicate the Semester(s) and year(s) assessment data were collected for this report.

Fall (indicate years below)	Winter (indicate years below)	SP/SU (indicate years below)
2015		

2. Provide assessment sample size data in the table below.

# of students enrolled	# of students assessed
21	16

3. If the number of students assessed differs from the number of students enrolled, please explain why all enrolled students were not assessed, e.g. absence, withdrawal, or did not complete activity.

Four (4) students enrolled in the course who had taken Exam III did not take Exam IV and were absent on the day of the exam. One student who was enrolled in the course was absent for both Exam III and IV. Of the remaining 16 students who completed the multiple-choice exam, two students elected not to complete the essay portion of the exam.

4. Describe how students from all populations (day students on campus, DL, MM, evening, extension center sites, etc.) were included in the assessment based on your selection criteria.

All students enrolled in ANT202 FA15 were assessed.

5. Describe the process used to assess this outcome. Include a brief description of this tool and how it was scored.

Assessment was based on a 50-question multiple-choice exam (Exam IV) and an essay question (Essay IV). The essay question was completed as extra credit following the multiple-choice exam. Both the multiple-choice exam questions and

the essay questions were developed in collaboration with another Anthropology instructor. An answer key was used to score the multiple choice exam. A rubric (also developed in collaboration with an Anthropology instructor from the Social Sciences department) was used to score the essay. All essay questions were scored by an Anthropology instructor from the Social Sciences department, other than the instructor of the FA15 section.

6. Briefly describe assessment results based on data collected for this outcome and tool during the course assessment. Discuss the extent to which students achieved this learning outcome and indicate whether the standard of success was met for this outcome and tool.

Met Standard of Success: No

The average score on multiple-choice Exam IV was 79%. For 5 out of the 50 questions on the exam, the percentage of students answering these questions incorrectly exceeded 65%. The majority of questions answered incorrectly by students were those related to modern human variation; questions about the transitions to modern *Homo sapiens* (theory and archaeology) were answered incorrectly at a rate of less than 50%.

The average score on the Essay IV question was a 5.5 out of 10 points, or a 55%. This essay question asked students to explain the two predominant models in Paleoanthropology for the emergence of modern *Homo sapiens*, and to discuss the archaeological data which supports these models and their limitations. Most students understood these models (and could explain them in detail) but few could identify the archaeological data which supports these models.

7. Based on your interpretation of the assessment results, describe the areas of strength in student achievement of this learning outcome.

In general, students demonstrated an understanding of the major biocultural transitions (i.e. encephalization, tool making, migration out of Africa, and the emergence of anatomically modern *Homo sapiens*). Only 5 questions from multiple-choice Exam IV were answered incorrectly at a frequency of greater than 65%. Of these questions, most dealt with identifying terms / concepts associated with modern human variation.

In contrast to the multiple-choice Exam IV, the results from Essay IV were less encouraging. Most students demonstrated that they understood theoretical models for the emergence of modern *Homo sapiens*, but could not identify the data that supported these models or explain the limitations of this data.

8. Based on your analysis of student performance, discuss the areas in which student achievement of this learning outcome could be improved. If student met standard of success, you may wish to identify your plans for continuous improvement.

As with the previous outcome, students have demonstrated an understanding of the theories and models employed by Anthropology, but seem less capable of explaining how the data supports these theories. This outcome might be improved by a greater emphasis on the archaeological sites which provide the basis for these conclusions; while considerable time is devoted in the class to a discussion of the archaeological evidence, more time could be spent explaining how theories and models for human cultural transitions in prehistory come from the results of specific archaeological investigations.

## II. Course Summary and Action Plans Based on Assessment Results

1. Describe your overall impression of how this course is meeting the needs of students. Did the assessment process bring to light anything about student achievement of learning outcomes that surprised you?

In general, the course is meeting the requirements of a social sciences course; demonstrating how scientific investigation can help to answer questions about human evolution, behavior, and variation. It is also apparent that students understand the "big picture" of concepts relating to the course objectives in the master syllabus. It is somewhat surprising that, despite the amount of time spent on early hominin species and environment in the course, that students are often confused about how fossil evidence is used in Anthropology to address questions about evolution and behavior.

2. Describe when and how this information, including the action plan, was or will be shared with Departmental Faculty.

I will be sharing this information with our department Chair and make these results available to other department faculty. Some of the results will likely be shared with my department at our December (2016) department meeting.

3. Intended Change(s)

Intended Change	Description of the change	Rationale	Implementation Date
Assessment Tool	Currently, assessment for the course is based entirely on the results of multiple choice and essay exams. I would like to see one or more critical reading /	The current assessment criteria over-emphasize testing and downplay student critical thinking and reflection. A critical reading assignment would	2017

	<p>writing assignments added to the course.</p>	<p>allow students the time and latitude to critique concepts and to more fully integrate scientific evidence with the hypotheses and theories discussed in the course. A written assignment completed outside of class will also provide students with a learning mode other than an in-class test through which to demonstrate comprehension of the course material.</p>	
<p>Course Assignments</p>	<p>I would like to add two assignments to the course which focus on hominin evolution and on archaeological sites and evidence. The first would involve students creating a "time line" of hominin evolution that integrates fossil and cultural evidence. The second would be a "map" that summarizes the location, approximate dates, and archaeological evidence associated with the hominin species discussed in the course.</p>	<p>It is obvious from the assessment results that some students are not "connecting" the fossil and archaeological evidence with temporal and geographic change. These assignments would permit students to take a more expansive view of physical and cultural changes over time. They would also provide increased exposure to and review of the species names and site names discussed in the course.</p>	<p>2017</p>

4. Is there anything that you would like to mention that was not already captured?

I disagreed with the scores assigned by the social sciences faculty member who graded the essay portions of the assessment. While their scores stand as the official result of the assessment, I found that my own evaluations for Essay III and IV were several points higher. Our disagreement about the correct score on these assessment exams might have been resolved by the use of a far more detailed rubric.

### III. Attached Files

[Essay Exam 3 Questions and Rubric](#)

[Assessment Data and Summary Results](#)

[Essay Exam 4 Questions and Rubric](#)

<b>Faculty/Preparer:</b>	Christopher Barrett	<b>Date:</b> 11/21/2016
<b>Department Chair:</b>	Gregg Heidebrink	<b>Date:</b> 12/05/2016
<b>Dean:</b>	Kristin Good	<b>Date:</b> 12/06/2016
<b>Assessment Committee Chair:</b>	Ruth Walsh	<b>Date:</b> 01/09/2017

**COURSE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**I. Background Information**

1. Course assessed:  
 Course Discipline Code and Number: ANT 202  
 Course Title: Introduction to Physical Anthropology  
 Division/Department Codes: SS

2. Semester assessment was conducted (check one):

- Fall 20
- Winter 20
- Spring/Summer 20

3. Assessment tool(s) used: check all that apply.

- Portfolio
- Standardized test
- Other external certification/licensure exam (specify):
- Survey
- Prompt
- Departmental exam
- Capstone experience (specify):
- Other (specify):

4. Have these tools been used before?

- Yes
- No

If yes, have the tools been altered since its last administration? If so, briefly describe changes made.  
*Brief essay question with rubric added to multiple choice assessment tool.*

5. Indicate the number of students assessed/total number of students enrolled in the course.

*15/27*

6. Describe how students were selected for the assessment.

*Student that had completed their final exam took the assessment test.*

**II. Results**

1. Briefly describe the changes that were implemented in the course as a result of the previous assessment.

*More group discussion and interaction*

2. List each outcome that was assessed for this report exactly as it is stated on the course master syllabus.

*(See Master Syllabus.)*

3. Briefly describe assessment results based on data collected during the course assessment, demonstrating the extent to which students are achieving each of the learning outcomes listed above. **Please attach a summary of the data collected.**

*Students performed at 51% on the 30 multiple-choice questions.*

*Students performed at 70% on the brief essay. (Only fifteen students completed the essay question.)*

4. For each outcome assessed, indicate the standard of success used, and the percentage of students who achieved that level of success. **Please attach the rubric/scoring guide used for the assessment.**

*The expectations are that students perform at an average of 70% on the assessment exam.*

*(See master syllabus for rubric.)*

5. Describe the areas of strength and weakness in students' achievement of the learning outcomes shown in assessment results.

*Strengths: Those that answered the brief essay did well.*

*Weaknesses: Assessment should be administered separately from final exam.*

COURSE ASSESSMENT REPORT

III. Changes influenced by assessment results

1. If weaknesses were found (see above) or students did not meet expectations, describe the action that will be taken to address these weaknesses.

As stated above, the exam will be given separately in future in order to obtain a larger and more representative sample of students who, additionally, are not already tired out by a final exam.

2. Identify intended changes that will be instituted based on results of this assessment activity (check all that apply). Please describe changes and give rationale for change.

a. [ ] Outcomes/Assessments on the Master Syllabus
Change/rationale:

b. [ ] Objectives/Evaluation on the Master Syllabus
Change/rationale:

c. [ ] Course pre-requisites on the Master Syllabus
Change/rationale:

d. [ ] 1st Day Handouts
Change/rationale:

e. [ ] Course assignments
Change/rationale:

f. [X] Course materials (check all that apply)
[X] Textbook
[ ] Handouts
[ ] Other:

g. [X] Instructional methods
Change/rationale: More hands on activities

h. [ ] Individual lessons & activities
Change/rationale:

3. What is the timeline for implementing these actions? Fall semester.

IV. Future plans

1. Describe the extent to which the assessment tools used were effective in measuring student achievement of learning outcomes for this course.

Not effective in that a large, and attentive, sample was not attained.

2. If the assessment tools were not effective, describe the changes that will be made for future assessments.

The exam will be given alone in the future.

3. Which outcomes from the master syllabus have been addressed in this report?

All [X] Selected [ ]

If "All", provide the report date for the next full review: Three years

Submitted by:

Print: David Mackles
Faculty/Preparer

Signature [Handwritten Signature]

Date: 5/10/10

Print: R. Latta
Department Chair

Signature [Handwritten Signature]

Date: 5/11/10

Print:
Dean/Administrator

Signature [Handwritten Signature]

Date: MAY 12 2010

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Approved by the Assessment Committee 11/08

logged 5/14/10 sy

**COURSE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**Background Information**

1. Course assessed:  
Course Discipline Code and Number: ANT202  
Course Title: Physical Anthropology  
Division/Department Codes: H/SS
  
2. Semester assessment was conducted (check one):  
 Fall 20\_\_  
 Winter 20 *06*  
 Spring/Summer 20\_\_
  
3. Assessment tool(s) used: check all that apply.  
 Portfolio  
 Standardized test  
 Other external certification/licensure exam (specify):  
 Survey  
 Prompt  
 Departmental exam  
 Capstone experience (specify):  
 Other (specify):
  
4. Have these tools been used before?  
 Yes  
 No

If yes, have the tools been altered since its last administration? If so, briefly describe changes made.

5. Indicate the number of students assessed/total number of students enrolled in the course.  
26/26
  
6. Describe how students were selected for the assessment.  
All students in section

**Results**

1. Briefly describe the changes that were implemented in the course as a result of the previous assessment.  
N/A
  
2. State each outcome from the master syllabus that was assessed.  
All
  
3. Briefly describe assessment results based on data collected during the course assessment, demonstrating the extent to which students are achieving each of the learning outcomes listed above. Please attach a summary of the data collected.  
33 multiple-choice questions representative of total course content were selected from text test bank (selected questions were not encountered in either mid-term or final examination), and administered in a pre- and post-test format. Post-test results indicate that 96% of improved their scores. The total average pre-test score was 33.6% (11/33); average post-test score was 58.7% (19/33).
  
4. For each outcome assessed, indicate the standard of success used, and the percentage of students who achieved that level of success.  
Initial criterion for measuring course success was for students to obtain an average score of 90% on the post-test. No students met that criterion. However, there was an average score gain of 87% in all post-test results. Measurement for success to be reevaluated.

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COURSE ASSESSMENT REPORT

- 5. Describe the areas of strength and weakness in students' achievement of the learning outcomes shown in assessment results.

Strengths: Human variation and adaptation, primatology

Weaknesses: Genetics, evolutionary systematics

Changes influenced by assessment results

- 1. If weaknesses were found (see above) or students did not meet expectations, describe the action that will be taken to address these weaknesses, along with a timeline for these actions. Use of workbook to provide students practice with concepts during with of those sections. Adjustment of success criteria (See below.)

- 2. Identify any other intended changes that will be instituted based on results of this assessment activity (check all that apply). Please describe changes and give rationale for change.

[ ] Master syllabus
Change/rationale:

[ ] Curriculum
Change/rationale:

[ ] Course syllabus
Change/rationale:

[x] Course assignments
Change/rationale: See "course materials" changes.

[x] Course materials (check all that apply)

[ ] Textbook

[ ] Handouts

[x] Other: Workbook

Change/rationale: Providing students with more "hands-on" examples will improve their understanding.

[ ] Instructional methods
Change/rationale:

[ ] Other:
Change/rationale:

Future plans

- 1. Describe the extent to which the assessment tools used were effective in measuring student achievement of learning outcomes for this course. The pre- post-test is representative of course content and will be retained.
2. If the assessment tools were not effective, describe the changes that will be made for future assessments. Intital criterion for success was too ambitious. Criteria in future will conform to those expectations found in other social science sections. (eg. A two-fold criteria: #1. 75% of students will improve their score, #2. an average increase of 50% from pre- to post-test scores.

Submitted by:

Name: DAVID MACKRES Date: 7/15/06

Department Chair: Randy M. LaHate Date: 7/19/06

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