

From: [Haddad, Deborah](#)
To: [Vaessin, Harald](#)
Cc: [Vankeerbergen, Bernadette](#)
Subject: Anthropology 3304, 3411, and 3597.04
Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2014 8:16:37 AM
Attachments: [GE Rationale The Living Primates.docx](#)
[Anthro 3304 BIO ELO Assess.docx](#)
[Anthro 3411 Bio Sci Rationale.docx](#)
[Anthro 3411 BIO ELO Assess.docx](#)
[Anthro 3597.04 BIO ELO Assess.docx](#)
[image001.png](#)

Dear Professor Vaessin,

Thank you and the NMS Panel for your close review of three Anthropology courses submitted for the Biological Science GE designation: Anthropology 3304, 3411, and 3597.04. I am writing to address some of the Panel's concerns as well as to express a few of my own.

An apparent common concern of the NMS Panel for each of the three courses questions the Anthropology Department's consideration of students' preparedness before enrolling in these courses. As you know from Dr. Larsen's 7 October 2014 letter which accompanied each submission, the Department of Anthropology has recently completed an extensive and intensive review of its curricula. Decisions about these and other courses in the Anthropology curricula were made largely on the basis of several years of thoughtful, well-considered course and program assessment.

Among those decisions was the determination that students can be successful in Anthropology 3304 and 3411 without first having had all of the material covered in Anthropology 2200 and its prerequisite. Instead, only the material that the faculty have determined is necessary preparation for each course has been front-loaded into the course.

Anthropology 3597.04 (4597.04) has been taught for years by Professor Crews with an attrition rate of 5% or less. The decision to make the course more widely accessible was a well-considered one made by him and other faculty. As implied in the rationale statement (#2), Professor Crews does, indeed, feel that first- and second-year students can benefit from and be successful in this course.

Moreover, given the course and program assessment that led to the changes to these three and other courses as well as the department's culture of assessment, you can be sure that the result of these changes will be closely monitored beyond GE assessment plans. Your concerns regarding prerequisites and appropriate course levels are well-taken and, of course, as with all courses, there is a strong incentive to be certain that students are sufficiently prepared to be successful in courses. Nonetheless, as Steve Fink has said, a review for GE status is not about these kinds of questions which are asked by the department's divisional Panel; rather, the key to a review for GE status rests in the determination as to whether or not the course meets a GE category's expected learning outcomes.

In the following, the concerns of the NMS Panel as recorded by Bernadette Vankeerbergen are addressed.

Anthropology 3304 (course change; requesting GE Natural Science—Biological Science)

- More attention should be paid to ways the course will be addressing Natural Science GE goals. More detailed rationale about how course covers the 4 GE expected learning outcomes is needed.
 - **The 1st attachment includes the GE rationale for 3304 that accompanied the course submission; each ELO is addressed individually. Please clarify the kind of details that the Panel feels are missing.**
- Assessment plan could be more specific. Please address each of the 4 GE expected learning

outcomes individually and link these to direct (and indirect) methods of assessment. Provide specific examples.

- **See 2nd attachment**

Anthropology 3411 (course change; requesting GE Natural Science—Biological Science)

- More attention should be paid to ways the course will be addressing Natural Science GE goals. More detailed rationale about how course covers the 4 GE expected learning outcomes is needed. Provide more specifics about the materials covered every week (e.g., which pages from textbook are covered every week—some weeks Panel does not know what is happening in class).
 - **The 3rd attachment includes the GE rationale for 3411 that accompanied the course submission; each ELO is addressed individually. Please clarify the kind of details that the Panel feels are missing.**
 - **The readings for weeks 3 and 9 will be added to the syllabus.**
- Assessment plan is not specific. Please address each of the 4 GE expected learning outcomes individually and link these to direct (and indirect) methods of assessment. Provide specific examples.
 - **See 4th attachment.**

Anthropology 3597.04 (course change; requesting GE Natural Science—Biological Science)

- What GE expected learning outcomes are thoroughly covered in the course? The GE rationale document is very general/needs to be more specifics. As far as the Panel can see, ELOs 1 and 2 are not covered by course (except for very brief references). For example, for ELO 1: It would seem that students will have basic *exposure* but will not *understand* the basic facts, principles, theories and methods of modern science. ELO 3 might potentially be covered. Only ELO 4 seems to be truly covered with respect to amount of time, percent of the grade, and emphasis of the course.
 - **See 5th attachment.**
- This is a GE Cross-Disciplinary Seminar. The current GE status seems at odds with request for GE Natural Science—Biological Science. By definition, a Cross-Disciplinary Seminar looks at a topic from a variety of disciplines. Requesting the GE Natural Science—Biological Science status would make this course less cross-disciplinary (i.e., would require substantial changes to the actual course). Current GE Cross-Disciplinary Seminars do not have another GE category, except for GE Diversity.
 - **The ASC Operations Manual does not identify these 2 categories as mutually exclusive. The Anthropology Department proposes that the course substantially satisfies the Biological Science category's expected learning outcomes. The Department seeks that designation for this course and, if denied, seeks to learn what is needed in the course to meet that standard.**
- Proposal should have GE ELO-specific assessment plan. The current assessment plan is a course assessment plan, not a GE assessment plan.
 - **The assessment plan conveyed in the 5th attachment is, in fact, assessment for the GE ELOs. Course assessment will be handled differently.**

Please let me know what additional information would be helpful.

Deborah



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