



## Senate Committee on University Planning

### Academic Unit Review Summary: DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Site Visit	March 5-6, 2015
Informal Response to Planning	April 17, 2015
Formal Response to Planning	September 16, 2015
Implementation Update	May 2017
Midterm Review	2018-19

#### Review Team Members:

- Dr. Lynne Phillips, Anthropology, Memorial University (Chair of the Review Team)
- Dr. Christiane Paponnet-Cantat, Anthropology, University of New Brunswick
- Dr. Stephen Claxton-Oldfield, Psychology, Mount Allison University

#### Recommendations of the Academic Unit Review

##### *For the Department:*

1. Re-think the unit to develop an identity and purpose for anthropology within the university system, based on existing resources. The Department of Anthropology needs to decide what it is and where it belongs. We have suggested a focus on Internationalization and Aboriginal Studies, both to draw on its expertise and to contribute to the university's profile. Effective communication with the university should be part of this re-thinking process (see recommendation #3). We recommend that this new profile for the unit be developed in a retreat, with a report to the Dean, VP and President, about how it plans to move forward and take a place within the university. This is essential to do before any retirements within the unit take place.
2. Re-configure the Curriculum. The Department needs to:
  - Withdraw its commitment to the four sub-field approach to anthropology and tailor the curriculum to the existing faculty complement and expertise.
  - Review the courses in the Academic Calendar and delete courses that are not being taught to ensure that there is correspondence between what is listed and what is offered.
  - Find common ground with other academic units to cross-list courses when there are gaps or synergies.
  - Team-teaching first year Anthropology was very much appreciated by students.
  - The department may want to reconsider this approach in the future.
  - Consider greater integration of the curriculum with the folklore and other archival resources.
3. Immediate attention needs to be paid to informing senior administration about what anthropology is up to. Anthropology is not well understood within the university and the unit needs to take leadership

in showing the university what the Department of Anthropology has been achieving (e.g., graduating well-trained students; working on First Nations issues). This lack of understanding has a direct effect on receiving support and may impact on upcoming replacement decisions. Therefore, effective communication is essential. The website should be considered part of the Department's communication strategy to give visibility to the department; it should be frequently updated and include student activities and faculty research interests, publications, awards, etc.

4. Take the lead in the development of Aboriginal Studies at the university, drawing on the existing expertise in the unit (e.g., cultural ecology, medical traditional knowledge, Shamanism and traditional belief systems) and working collaboratively with other units.
5. Explore opportunities for amalgamating with another academic unit. This recommendation is based on the concern that three faculty members is a less than optimum size for an academic unit. There are many examples across the country of disciplines maintaining their integrity and benefitting from being in administrative units with more than one discipline. The obvious possibility for Anthropology is Sociology, but administrative alliances could also be made with International Relations or Canadian Studies or indeed with units in the Faculty of Arts, such as Religious Studies.

***For the Dean's consideration:***

6. Consider developing a venue for sharing research and teaching interests within the Faculty of Social Sciences. Such discussions would likely provide fruitful insights on the value of the different disciplines within the social sciences and perhaps redefine perspectives on anthropology. This would also help the department to reconnect with other departments for interdisciplinary *rapprochement*.
7. Consider having a joint Honours seminar in the Faculty of Social Sciences to support small units with few honours students. The Honours seminar would focus on the professionalization of the students (CV development, grant writing, applying for graduate school, research presentations, etc.) but it would also give them the opportunity to share their ideas with students in other disciplines.
8. Identify people in the community who might participate in an annual Social Sciences job fair for students. This suggestion reflects student interest in career development issues.
9. Retirements need to be replaced. We received the clear message that a 4th position would not be forthcoming to the unit, and the above accepts that as the reality. However, we feel strongly that retirements must be replaced so that the unit members have reassurance that they can successfully regroup and demonstrate their value to the university.