Students Plan Kamakura Trip to Study Foodways

By Chris Pugliese

What do you call a combination of five students, one teacher, and a grant to go to Japan this summer? There are a lot of possible answers, but one that we can all agree on is excited! A group of students led by Professor Tomoko Hamada-Connolly has successfully received funding via the ASIANetwork Freeman Fellowship for a summer study in Japan.

The Freeman Fellowship is an annual scholarship organized and secured through ASIANetwork, a consortium of liberal arts colleges, to promote Asian Studies. ASIANetwork designed the fellowship to encourage research in East and Southeast Asia. The program targets the southern and western countries of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines and the northern countries of Taiwan, China, Japan, and Korea. Research is done through professor-led groups of students who, upon completing their stay in a country of their choice, create a presentation on their topic for ASIANetwork's annual conference that upcoming spring.

Professor Hamada-Connolly first learned of the program last November and encouraged students in her Japanese Society and Applied Anthropology courses to submit ideas based around the study of ritual practice in Japan. Faced with a daunting number of proposals – more than 30 – Hamada-Connolly needed to narrow the number to the allotted maximum of five undergraduates. It was then that she found a common topic between five of the students: foodways.

The five team members' projects, though all related to food and its corresponding ritual practices, vary incredibly, as do the academic backgrounds of the students themselves. Loretta Scott ('10), a major in linguistics, is centering her efforts on the realm of digital communication.

"My topic is focused mostly on youth and digital communication arising as a new source of social groups and belonging, because that's how I've been able to keep my personal study of the language up," Scott said. "I got a lot of help talking to Japanese native speakers over the internet, whereas I never would've had access to such a great resource..."
otherwise. It intrigues me as a new sort of social culture, and I wanted to delve further into it from the other side of the computer screen."

East Asian Studies major Jeff DeMars (‘11) will be focusing his research on the role that food rituals play in business culture. "I thought it would be incredibly interesting to research the impact of ritual practice, something that can be very personal, in a business setting, something more public and professional."

Connected to the topic is the project of Sam Davis (‘11). Having spent a year at Keio University, the Music and East Asian Studies major has had the privilege of already familiarizing himself with Japan. While there, he found himself fascinated by the country’s drinking culture and the major role it occupies in business proceedings.

"I came up with my topic of study by noticing all the taboos our culture associates with alcohol. My experience with drinking in Japan – and the nagging feeling that the Japanese have a healthier drinking culture than America – led me to consider the drinking practice in Japan. From this, the distinct role of the drinking of tea and coffee arose as well," Davis said.

Rounding out the team are Anthropology and Linguistics major Chris Pugliese (’09) and Linguistics and Japanese major Nathan Revere (’10). Pugliese’s interests lie in the shifting dietary pattern in many Asian countries. "The average caloric intake of the Japanese, per capita, has increased by roughly 400-500 calories a day within the past 70 years. Some say this is due to the growth in consumption of wheat, milk and beef as well as a higher intake of sugar,” Pugliese said. "I’m particularly interested in seeing how food preparation within the household has changed in the past twenty years. The industrialization and globalization of markets has lead to an increase in refined, processed, and convenience foods; it would be interesting to see how much these products have replaced more natural foods and traditional ways of preparation."

Revere’s project focuses on politeness and its role in meals in the home as well as eating out. Unfortunately, he could not be reached for comments.

In the course of finalizing their academic projects, the students have been faced with planning out additional logistics of the trip itself. Hamada-Connolly has been looking into homestays for the researchers in her hometown of Kamakura in the Kanagawa prefecture.

"I think it is crucial that we stay with a family during our research. Creating trust with a community by living with them will allow us to see the internal facets of life that a Japanese host family may not release to just anyone,” Pugliese commented.

When asked his thoughts on adjusting to life with an unfamiliar family, Davis responded, “I think the hardest part will be the subtle cultural differences. Little miscommunications may be common and, moreover, hard to notice. However, I again feel that part of the benefit that comes form this kind of research is that broadening of perspectives that comes from the quest to find and avoid those kinds of mistakes.”

The group will continue the planning process until their departure date of May 19th. “To sum it up,” Revere stated, “we’ve got a heck of a lot of work to do, but in the end it will all pay off.”
Ask a Catholic if they chew the transubstantiated flesh of Christ when they take communion, and they might tell you yes and they might tell you no. This is one of the questions that has puzzled me as I get to know the people at St. Bede Catholic Church and the Catholic Campus Ministry in Williamsburg.

For my senior honors thesis, I am studying belief and religious experience in Catholicism, with particular questions about embodiment and real presence. I officially started my research in the spring of 2009, but went to mass during the preceding fall for a paper in Ethnographic Research (ANTH 302).

Surprisingly, it wasn’t just anthropology that led me to this topic. I originally had planned to do honors research in philosophy, with an emphasis on belief formation and the writings of American philosophers like William James, George H. Mead and John Dewey. Along the way, I realized that understanding the everyday belief systems of people who live and work around me was potentially more rewarding than philosophizing from the comfort of Blair Hall. So, I crossed the Sunken Gardens and asked Dr. Brad Weiss if he would help me begin a long-term project.

Since I’ve started, I have been going to mass, interviewing members of the clergy and lay people, going to CCM youth group meetings, and sitting in on “adult faith formation” Bible studies. Listening to these people discuss their faith is how I have become interested in the notion of transubstantiation of the Eucharist, the Catholic belief that the bread and wine of Holy Communion is actually physically transformed into Christ’s body and blood during mass. I’m not Catholic – not even Christian, really – and so the idea seemed quite unnatural at first.

When I sat in on a CCM youth group meeting on Ash Wednesday, I heard some very interesting discussion about the meaning of Communion. One person said that it’s really the true “gamble” of the faith, because if Christ were not truly present, then worshiping the bread and wine would be idolatrous. Yet, it still seemed strange to me that Catholics actually believe they are eating real flesh and blood at Communion. After all, they don’t consider themselves cannibals, I thought to myself.

I have noticed that the word “body” is used in a variety of ways by Catholics. It might mean a particular human body (“my body”) or God’s temple (“God’s body”). Or it could be used to describe the present body and blood at Communion (“the body of Christ”), the entire church itself, cemented together by communion with God (“the body of Christ”), or literally to explain the body of Christ on the cross (“Christ’s body”). Each way of talking carries different moral lessons that strive to teach Catholics how to act piously.

These ideas of transubstantiation and “real presence” are particularly important for forming a feeling of community. I have been told by multiple people already, with a twinkle in their eye, that at any given moment someone somewhere in the world is taking Communion.
The feeling of being a member of a larger community (in this case, very large) is quite similar to “imagined community,” an idea developed by Benedict Anderson in a 1983 book. Anderson was really talking about the spirit and history of nationalism, but I think this idea applies to Catholics who feel solidarity with the entire “body of Christ” around the world.

At the youth group meeting, we were talking about the exact words in the Bible that could tell us whether chewing the Eucharist is acceptable or not. One student said that the verb Jesus used to teach communion to his disciples was not “to eat,” but something else, like “to tear.” This is one example of how a Catholic might put into words his or her exact relationship to the community as a whole. It’s not so much taking as it is partaking.

My experiences with people at St. Bede and the CCM have been only a little awkward. As is expected, people are always a little wary when you tell them you want to come in to their church, meeting, or office and ask them questions about their faith. I am always sure to tell them that I’m curious and not skeptical or challenging.

I have often thought about my choice to study a group in Williamsburg, when I could have traveled half-way around the world to milk a thesis from an exotic culture, like so many of my ambitious peers. But, I have come to resolution with my decision; studying people who have many of the same cultural practices as me and speak the same language offers a wonderful opportunity to study religious experience and belief. I hope that this method will lead to fruitful insight.

I plan on finishing my thesis in the fall semester of 2009, under the direction of Dr. Weiss, and graduating in December. Until then, I will continue going to mass (or, in the spirit of Catholic guilt, avoiding it), and asking strange questions to the parishioners who are quickly becoming my friends.

A Componential Analysis of Archaic Zymurgy

By Alexandra Martin

Beer is one of the world’s oldest beverages; references to its fermentation date back to Mesopotamia and Egypt. Along with bread, which has been called the staff of life, beer has provided sustaining carbohydrates for millennia. Four intrepid archaeology grad students have tasted and reviewed three beers all based on old recipes to see just what people of the past were enjoying.

The first is Midas Touch, brewed by Dogfish Head in Delaware. The recipe was developed based on chemical residue analysis of clay vessels excavated in Turkey dating to 2700 years ago, and includes original ingredients: barley, muscat grapes, honey, and saffron. The vessels were apparently recovered by archaeologists from King Midas’ own tomb. Funerary objects associated with the burial included the remains of a funeral feast and a collection of Iron Age drinking vessels. Dogfish Head brewers recreated the recipe to serve at a UPenn function in 2001 commemorating King Midas’ funeral feast, making it the oldest-known fermented brew available at that time. (Dogfish Head has more recently released a specialty beer, Chateau Jiahu, based on a 9000 year old Chinese recipe, also based on information recovered archaeologically.)

Dogfish Head’s website describes the beer as an ale tasting like something between a wine and a mead, and indicates that it may be well-paired with Asian dishes, risotto, curries, and baked fish or chicken. We found it to have a sweet, full taste with strong notes of honey and delicate spices. One taster suggested that although it smells sweeter than it is, it would be too sweet to enjoy its complex flavors beyond one pint. Although light on carbonation, Midas Touch is yeasty, contains 9% alcohol and is definitively a beer. Another taster thought that this would be a good beer to enjoy as a treat, and we agreed that it is perhaps a dessert beer; “but not sissy.” The majority agreed on Midas as a favorite ancient brew.

Next we sampled a Hefeweissbier from the world’s oldest brewery. Beer production began at the Weihenstephan Monastery in Upper Bavaria, Germany in 768, according to documentation of a hop garden in the area. The brewery was technically licensed in 1040 by the City of Freising, giving it a
concrete founding date as the oldest working brewery.

The brewery's website describes their hefeweizen as a refreshing wheat beer with 5.4% alcohol that may well accompany Bavarian Weisswurst (white sausage) and other light dishes. We found it to be mild, fruity and light with a pleasingly raw, unfiltered quality. The traditional wheat beer elements of orange peel and coriander were present but subtle. For our neophyte beer taster, the mild quality of the beer made it the favored of the bunch, but another tester found it to have so light a finish that it was reminiscent of an American lager. Ultimately, a pleasant, if not terribly standout wheat beer.

Finally we reviewed Nostradamus from Brasserie Caracole in the village of Falmignoul, Belgium. The brewery has been producing Belgian-style ales since 1766, making it the youngest of the bunch (but still older than the US!). The brewery has changed names several times over the centuries, but has been making ales particular to the Wallonia region in the southern part of Belgium throughout its history.

The Brasserie's distributors online feature four traditional ales, Nostradamus being the darkest and heaviest of the lot with 9.5% alcohol content. The recipe includes special malt roasts and Saaz hops (a spicy hop from the Czech Republic), and the brown ale is known for its complex flavor and aroma. Brasserie Caracole suggests enjoying it as an after-dinner drink or a night cap. We found it to be very full, with a nice smell and flavors of molasses, taffy, or dark rum with subtle spices. One taster critiqued the flavors of the brew as extreme, finding it to be both a little too bitter and too sweet. There was a feeling of old library and aged leather to this beer and a delicious worldly scent.

Overall, our foray into ancient and historic brews demonstrated the variety possible in recipe and technique that have likely contributed to the popularity of beer throughout time and across continents. It is certainly popular among archaeologists today, whether created based on post-excavation analysis or simply enjoyed post-excavation.
A Discussion about a Recent Field Methods Class with Kathryn Sikes

Interview by Katrina Christiano

Last semester, Anthropology grad student Kathryn Sikes ran a class for undergraduates that helped to excavate portions of City Point, Virginia. City Point is an area with a long and eventful history spanning thousands of years, and this excavation was aimed at revealing more of that past. Kathryn and her team of undergraduates discovered thousands of artifacts and a possible well during their search, and they are currently processing this material in the lab. This is where I met with Kathryn and was able to ask her some questions about what running this class was like for her:

KC: Why did you decide to create and run this class?
KS: I wanted to give undergraduate students the chance to see a whole project from start to finish to give them a general overview of the processes involved. Instead of stopping at field methods, like most field schools, I used a small, manageable project, which allowed the students to analyze the material in the lab that they dug up in the field. Including undergrads in ongoing research is especially helpful for those doing undergraduate honors theses. By doing this project with the National Park Service, everyone won. The students got a great experience, I got research for my dissertation, and the National Park Service had some of their land surveyed for free. While the project was small in scale, it could always be expanded.

KC: Do you have any advice for other graduate students who would like to do something similar?
KS: I had 12 very motivated students with a genuine interest in the project. They all worked very well together and did a great job for the National Park Service. So I was lucky, in part because I advertised the class among majors and capped enrollment at a low number. In addition to good students, it is also important that you are prepared and can devote a lot of time to the project. If you run a similar project, the National Park Service or whoever you are working for should be advised that the pace of the dig is going to be a lot slower than a CRM job. I would recommend that graduate students run this type of class because it gives them both teaching experience and progress toward their own research.
Bahamian Shipping in Black
By Grace Turner

In the Caribbean shipping was always of critical importance. The first inhabitants only gained access to these islands as their vessels and navigational skills allowed them to move away from the mainland. With the arrival of Europeans their larger, ocean-going ships allowed them to draw the Caribbean into a more global network. Within this broad scheme, the tiny Bahama Islands, at the northwestern edge of the Caribbean Sea, appeared to be simply a peripheral colony. For over 300 years, however, inhabitants of these islands were able to make use of the archipelago’s location on major shipping routes to their advantage.

Understanding the Caribbean, within the context of shipping as the earliest means of inter-continental transportation, gives new insight into the role of the Bahamas within the region during the creation and maintenance of European empires. The strongly maritime-based Bahamian economy also affected the conditions of enslavement for those Afro-Bahamians involved.

From the earliest period of European settlement the Bahamas developed a highly mobile seafaring economy. Licenses were granted to cut cedar and braziletto (a dye wood), collect ambergris (a by-product from sperm whales), for whaling, and salvaging wrecks. This latter activity was the most controversial for the Spanish at Cuba. They labeled Bahamians as pirates for salvaging Spanish wrecks in Bahamian waters and invaded the colony several times, beginning in 1684, to punish such actions.

The independent and casual nature of this transitory seafaring economy was reflected in the lifeways of all the participants, whether they were white or black; even slave or free. Governor Shirley gave this assessment of Bahamians in a 1768 report, “great Numbers of the inhabitants being Blacks, Mulattoes and Persons, who live by Wrecking and Plunder and are People of a very bold and daring Spirit, which makes it highly necessary to have a proper force to enable the Civil power to put their laws in execution.” (CO23/8:3-5). As the governor implied, non-Whites were a significant part of this seafaring work force.

That shipping was a particularly strong industry for the Bahamas is evident in the amount of slaves employed in seafaring activities. The Bahamas had the highest percentage of slaves employed in shipping activities among the British islands (Higman 1984:48). Historian Jeffrey Bolster cites the Bahamas and Bermuda as the leading colonies employing slaves in a type of shipping he terms as “deep sea labor” (1998:19).

Certainly Bahamian shipping aimed to facilitate trade with the rest of the region. In fact, the Bahamas occasionally exported locally-built vessels, and boat timbers to other Caribbean islands (Bahamas Blue Books 1834-1884).


Colonial Office series 23 (CO23/8), Letter from Governor Thomas Shirley to the Board of Trade, December 9th. Dept of Archives, Nassau, Bahamas.

A Survey of Undergraduate Students in Anthropology

By: Dr. Tomoko Hamada Connolly

About seventy undergraduates are majoring in Anthropology this year. What kinds of students are they? What are they thinking about their concentration? What are they planning for their future? Why do they choose anthropology? In order to assess the state of undergraduates and anthropology education at the College, Dept's undergraduate committee chaired by Dr. Barbara King, conducted a survey of anthropology concentrators in spring 2009. We received a total of 39 valid responses. The followings are highlights of the survey findings.

(1) The Status of Anthropology majors
A majority of concentrators declared anthropology majors in their sophomore year (34 in sophomore year, versus 4 in junior and only one in senior year) - 38.2% declared in the fall semester while 47.1% did so in spring. Stated reasons for declaring anthropology concentration can be classified into the following groups.

(a) Earlier/ pre-college positive experiences (at high school, etc.).

Ten students arrived at WM with determination to major in a particular subfield (8 students in archaeology, 1 in bio, 1 in general anthropology). Here are their comments:

- I came to William and Mary, because I wanted to focus on archaeology, but now I’m leaning more cultural studies.
- I had always had an interest in archaeology so I started taking anthropology classes when I got to college and enjoyed them, so I just kept taking them!
- I have always loved archaeology and the study of ancient societies
- Enjoyed an anthropology course in high school
- Interest in and experience with archaeology since freshman year of high school.

(b) Nine students said they “discovered” the joy of anthropology when they took intro and other Anthropology classes for the first time at the College

- I was interested in archaeology before arriving at the College, but introductory course in cultural anthropology exposed me to the interesting theoretical/epistemological concerns of the discipline, and I took more such courses.
- I took some intro level classes during my sophomore year and thought they were the most interesting of all the classes I had taken.
- I found myself to be very interested in cultural anthropology after my freshman adviser suggested I take the class.
- I took intro to Bioanthropology my freshman year and was intrigued by the study of bones and evolution. I was hooked from there
- While taking a biological anthropology class I realized that the major could offer me a unique and appealing balance between science and the humanities.
- I have always enjoyed history, but taking Cultural Anthropology in the senior year of high school and Intro to Archaeology in the first semester at W&M opened my mind to looking at the past (and present) focusing more on people than time. I enjoy studying history and anthropology together.
- I was initially undecided. Looking through the course catalog in the Anthropology section, it was the only subject I saw where I thought, “Wow...all of these sound really interesting.” The rest is history.
- I took the intro classes just because I was interested, but then took an archaeology class and decided I wanted to major in Anthropology
- Love of Archaeology, I call it “hands on history”
- Love of all things biological anthropological, desire to learn more about other subfields.

(c) Some responses give insights into why anthropology is attractive to them (7 replies)

- The way it trains you to think— reflexively and analytically, and to pick up on social details you may not have considered before Anthropology came into your life
- I love studying and thinking about culture and people. The field seemed to combine so many interesting things - culture, people, psychology, social psychology, evolution, religion, philosophy, etc...
- Love of Archaeology, I call it “hands on history”
- Love of all things biological anthropological, desire to learn more about other subfields.

We have learned that about half of the concentrators (53.8%) are double-majors. By far the most common double concentration is with History (6 students), followed by Classics (3), Philosophy(2), Environmental Policy(2) and Music (2). The rest are found in Chinese; Latin American Studies, English; Biology and Psychology (one in each category). 87.2% of the respondents state that Anthropology is their primary concentration. An overwhelming majority (92.3%) identify themselves with a particular subfield. The following table shows the breakdown of their subfield identification. As one can see, 50% of anthropology majors identify themselves as taking archaeology-track, while the rest are split between Cultural and Biological. This is an important finding for further discussion-making as it implies the department’s future needs of resources.
Another finding concerns their international study experiences. We have found that 42.1% of Anthropology majors have at least one semester study abroad. This trend may continue in the future—another possible subject of our concern.

(2) Life After Graduation

As for their future plans after graduation, 82.1% (32 students) want to pursue graduate studies. Out of these 32 responses, 26 students want to get into Anthropology-related graduate programs: ten individuals seek graduate studies in Anthropology-in-general; while others are more specific: they want Archaeology (3), Classical Archaeology (1), Applied Anthropology (1) and Cultural Anthropology (1). Six students like to combine two fields or choose at least one or the other of the following fields: Environment-Anthro (3); History-Anthro (1); Museum-Anthro (1), or Forensic- Area Study (1). Five students like to get into Education, Public health, Human Resources, Law & Government, and Business (one in each category). Five students are still undecided, and one student says that s/he intends to go into non-Anthropology field.

(3) Anthropology Course Offering and Curriculum

50% of 34 responses are quite positive with the current range of courses offered by this Department. Only one student expresses dissatisfaction (“poor”). However, specific comments written by students are quite instructive: Three students state that they want fewer area studies courses; two want more bio/physical; and two want more archaeology courses. Other suggestions include: more fieldwork in cultural; more ethnic studies; more old world arch; more MWF class; more courses in each semester (one each).

At present this department has fifteen full-time professors, one instructor; and one research professor in addition to several adjunct professors. They research and teach in a variety of geographical locations and disciplinary subfields (Archaeology, Cultural Anthropology, Biological Anthropology). Courses in the subfield of linguistics are cross-listed with the English Department. The department has programs in historical archaeology and sponsors summer field schools in Colonial Williamsburg, Werowocomoco, and Barbados. The Center for Archaeological Research and the Institute for Historical Biology and WM Archaeological Conservation Center also provide undergraduate research opportunities.

Anthropology students typically declare their major after completing 200-level introductory courses and small-class freshman seminars. They then take a variety of elective courses, ranging from Human Skeletal Biology, Indians of North America, and Ethnographic Research to Japanese Values through Literature and film. An increasing number of students also seek study-abroad. Before the end of their junior year, Anthro majors are required to complete Anthro 300 History of Anthropological Theories, and prepare themselves for productive senior year experiences. During the senior year, they will have three options: (1) to take academically rigorous Anthro 495-496 for one year to conduct independent research with a faculty mentor and to create a substantial Honors project to be evaluated by the Honors examination committee. (2) The second option is to take Anthro 460 Independent Study for one semester. This is a one-to-one tutorial on a topic agreed upon by the student and the instructor. (3) The third option is to join a small, writing intensive seminar for senior majors Anthro 470. Senior Seminar in Anthropology: 470’s topics will vary, reflecting the research specialization of faculty teaching each section. Students will conduct original research and produce a substantial paper. For the fall 2008, three sections of Anthro 460 were as follows:

**Anthropology and Alcohol. Smith.**

Alcohol is the most widely used drug and drinking is often a highly ritualized social event. In this seminar we will explore the role alcohol has played historically in politics, society, and the economy from a comparative cross-cultural perspective. Using historical, archaeological, and ethnographic sources, we will identify common themes in the social uses of alcohol and interpret the symbolic meanings people attach to drinking.

**Culture and Cuisine. Weiss.**

This course offers anthropological perspectives on the provisioning, preparation, and presentation of food. More than a matter of daily sustenance, or a source of nutrition benefits, food is an expressive and often highly contested culture material. We will examine an array of cultural dimension of food. Students will engage in ethnographic research on contemporary food issues.
Bioarchaeology. Blakey.
This course is for students interested in the use of human skeletal remains from archaeological sites as evidence of the health, behavior, culture, and social and ecological conditions of archaeological populations. The course builds on basic osteological knowledge and provides examples of the statistical treatment of paleopathological and paleodemographic data. The course is meant to introduce students to the conduct of bioarchaeological research. Students are expected to conduct independent research.

Knowing the above curriculum in anthropology, the undergraduate committee has examined how easy or difficult it is for a student to get into a specific course of the student’s choice. About 50% (17 out 34 responses) see no problem in registering for the courses they wanted, while about one third of the respondents write that it was difficult for them to get into Anthro 300 (10 students) and Intro Archaeology (2). Several students also mention that they had to get over-ride permissions from professors. As expected, a majority of Anthro concentrators have already completed 200 level courses during freshmen or sophomore year (Anthro201 Intro to Archaeology-86.2%, Anthro202 Intro to Cultural Anthropology-81.2% and Anthro 203 Intro to Biological Anthropology-87.5%). We have then asked about their evaluation of these introductory courses (201, 202, and 203) in two specific areas: (1) whether these courses introduce anthropological perspectives or not; and (2) whether they prepare them well for future course work. To our delight, we have found that many students are very positive about the quality of 200-level introductory courses. However, several students (7) mention that the quality of these courses depend on who teach these courses. A large majority of students are also very positive about Anthro 300 History of Anthropological Theories (19 out of 33). For example, they write that Anthro 300 is:
• very difficult and abstract but really changed my ways of thinking and critical thinking
• Very thorough in exploring knowledge of anthropological theory, and coursework was appropriate.

Twelve students who took or who are taking Senior courses/projects (470 Senior Seminar; or the first semester of 495-496 Honors) state that their experiences have been extremely positive:
• I liked this a great deal; the senior seminar for directing our own studies, and honors for getting to explore a topic of our choice
• Great opportunity for in depth research, preparation for grad school papers.
• Wonderful! I use my honors seminar to investigate a body of research I would not otherwise be exposed to through coursework.

• Without a doubt, most rewarding research experience of my life.

We note that the degree of student course satisfaction increases as they move from lower-level to upper level courses (see the attached statistics). The committee believes that Anthropology’s course sequence, from intro to theory to senior experiences, seems to be working quite well.

(4) Dept’s Advising system
An overwhelming majority (20 out of 32 responses) are quite happy with their own advisors, and they rave about the helpfulness of individual faculty advisors. However, it is surprising for us to learn that some students do not even know that they have advisors! Also a few students have had hard time finding a concentration advisor (see their comments about advisors)
• is there one?
• Bad. I hadn’t had a tenured member of the faculty (one that could be my major advisor; in cultural anthropology) until second semester, junior year. Pretty bad. However, once I found someone willing to be my advisor, he was very kind.
• My own advisor was kind of hard to contact, however I found other members of the faculty very helpful in providing advice/mentorship.
• individual advisers are great, but I feel that there is not much support for majors
• Not that helpful.
• OK. My meetings with my advisor were always productive, but I was abroad all of junior year on a non-W&M program, was thus very out of touch with what was going on on campus, and received no notice of anything having to do with a thesis, which I would probably have tried to do if I had been provided with the opportunity.

(5) Dept’s Website
Twenty two out of thirty descriptive comments are very positive about the Dept’s website. They use the site to get information and understand about the departmental guidelines. However, some students have not even looked at the site. A few suggestions:
• It has the guidelines well spelled out; the site itself could perhaps be promoted to students more (mentioned in classes?) as most students might not think to look there.
• The department’s website is adequate for providing standard information, but isn’t updated enough to keep students informed of current events in the department.

(6) Undergraduate Research Opportunity
We have inquired about their perceptions about the Dept’s undergraduate research opportunities, and have learned that
undergraduates can do amazing work. The following comments imply the positive effect of undergraduate research, and the importance of the student’s initiative. We have also learned that these opportunities are not often widely known.

- excellent, if you seek them out, but if you don’t go looking, no one will tell
- Amazing! Esp. with $$$ from the Charles Center! Every student should be made aware of the opportunities there are
- not well advertised, only if you become close with specific professor first
- it’s up to the student. If you have a good advisor and are willing to seek out opportunities, they can be found. Some professors seem much more inclined to steer graduate students in the direction of research, but again, depends on the professor:

(7) The State of Anthro Club
The Committee has learned that many students (12 of 30) never attend Anthropology Club meetings. Some students do not even know its existence. A few comments below summarize Anthropology Club’s status among our concentrators:

- The anthropology club is a good resource that is not being exploited to its full potential. It would be nice to get anthropology majors more involved, and to have representation from each of the subfields. I respect the efforts of the students who have tried to make it worthwhile this year:
- Poor had no idea it existed until I saw it on facebook! Needs to be advertised better:

(8) Final Comments
Open-ended comments at the end of the survey are very helpful. There are eighteen comments, that can be classified into Communication; Faculty; Curriculum; Undergrad/Graduate connections.

(a) Communication
- The anthropology department needs to get better at communicating with undergrads. We are never informed of department sponsored events unless a professor brings it up in class. Professors are very helpful when students have problems or questions
- It might behoove students and their confidence to be a little more public. Put some faces to the names of professors and what they do, let students know WHERE the anthropology dep’t is and what resources are there and how to use them (ie the Indian room, the bio anthropology lab, other things that I don’t know about)
- There is little done in the way of fostering communication between anthropology undergraduates. I only knew two people in Anthro 300. I feel like more seminars/events sponsored by the department could fix this. It would be nice to come out of this department with future connections.
- Department is great on a person-to-person level, but I feel lacks in addressing the concentrators at a larger level, such as with research opportunities, etc. I feel that you need to know a professor intimately to even hope to know about research opportunities.

(b) Faculty
- Great professors, but there seems to be a gap between the cultural and biological anthropology disciplines—would like to see more cross-discipline interaction
- I really enjoy studying as a major in the anthro department - the professors are very personable and helpful and eager to help me figure out potential research topics.
- Visiting professors have been very interesting... and not always in a good way.
- I like the close-knit aspect of the dept, I feel like teachers really go out of their way to help me.
- Professors are almost always very into their subjects, available for help and advice, etc
- The department has dedicated faculty that are always very willing to work with students.
- I feel that your success and involvement in the department is directly related to what professors you have had and how much they like you. Most of my Anthro major friends who have had research opportunities got them from professors they had spent lots of time with, either from Field Schools or classes. It would be nice to have that opportunity available to all concentrators.

(c) Curriculum
- My principal qualm consists in the sort of courses offered in the department. Outside of the introductory courses and senior seminars, most cultural anthropological courses are geographically, rather than topically oriented. Two problems result from this. First, I must learn only incidentally where the discipline is going, and cannot take further the theoretical trajectories merely introduced in ANTH201 and 300. Second, 300-level cultural anthropology courses are flooded with non-majors. While the perspective of economically, historically, and governmentally minded students enriches each discussion, the anthropological perspective usually must be taught to the predominantly non-anthropological studentry, rather than incorporated equally into the conversation.
- I feel that we need more professors and thus more classes available to us. 202 and 203 have been difficult to sign up for. For example this Spring only 202 was offered on
M/W/F and 203 not at all. This really limits the opportunity for students to take them and especially if the student lives off campus.

- I do not think the department should require a second cultural anthropology course beyond the introductory course. For those like me who are not interested in cultural anthropology, that requirement just prevents me from taking a class I am truly interested in, such as archaeology or a biological anthropology course.

- It is usually very difficult to get into an upper-level class—a broader offering would be nice, e.g., we have lots on colonial Americas and some on Africa, but not much at all that has been offered recently on other areas of the world.

- The range of classes can be somewhat limited and rather biased toward cultural anthropology—archaeology and biological anthropology are not as well represented in terms of classes offered.

(d) Undergrad/Graduate Students Issue

- I wish that undergrads and graduate students were treated in the same manner by professors. I’ve had issues in the past with professors verbally expressing an interest in working only with graduate students, which makes it difficult when you’re trying to take initiative as an undergrad.

- Also, the department tends to express a bias toward the graduate students. Undergraduate students are much less frequently informed about events within the department, especially things like guest lecturers, special programs, or even department social events.

These comments are quite helpful. The survey results in general show that most students are happy with the quality of Anthropology faculty and curriculum. They want us to improve departmental communication, and not to favor graduate students over undergraduates. They want Department to create a mechanism for more systematic information sharing, especially about key issues such as research opportunities, guest lectures, deadlines, finding advisors, and so forth. We may also need to look at the role of Anthropology Club.

In conclusion, the Committee members are quite pleased with the over-all positive assessment of our program by anthropology concentrators, and we sincerely thank them for their feedback. So what do you think? We would love to get your feedback.

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