

## **Department of Anthropology**

### **Interim Progress Report Regarding the Department of Anthropology 2010-11 Academic Review**

**May 6, 2016**

On July 22, 2011 we received a memo from Dr. Gerald Baldasty and James Antony outlining the Graduate School Council Recommendations following our 2010-11 Academic Review. The memo states the following: “The Graduate School Council recommended continuing status for the Department’s degree programs, with a review in 10 years (2020-2021). The recommendation is contingent upon the Department submitting an interim progress report in two years, by Spring Quarter, 2013, regarding the following issues:

- Diversity and students’ concerns about the experiences of discrimination.
- Develop more intellectual links across the sub-disciplines.
- Develop a strategic plan that balances separate priorities expressed in each subdisciplines strategic plan with a commitment to shared vision and mission of the department and discipline as a whole.”

An interim progress report was submitted in spring 2013 outlining steps taken in the 2011-12 and 2012-2013 academic years to address these 3 issues. In a response from the Graduate School, the Department was asked to submit another interim report after another three years. The present document outlines steps taken on these same 3 issues during the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 academic years.

#### ***Diversity***

Promotion of diversity is the charge of the Diversity Committee. This committee has been very active during these two years, continuing some initiatives from previous years, and creating some new activities. These include:

- 1) A training module on “Diversity and Inclusion in Teaching” Is included every year in the TA Training workshop, and it has been open to all graduate students and faculty members.
- 2) The Diversity Committee organized field trips for students and faculty to attend the AAA traveling exhibit “Race: Are We So Different?” in Winter 2014 when it was at the Pacific Science Center. DC members secured funding to cover the cost of admission.
- 3) A number of hires have taken place in our department over the past three years, as described below; the Diversity Committee worked closely with both search committees at every stage of the process to implement our Excellence in Faculty Hiring Guidelines: developing a job ad, publicizing the position and working to recruit a diverse pool of applicants, drafting a rubric to be used in evaluation of candidates, formulating short-lists, and assessing candidates following their campus visits.
- 4) In Spring 2014 the DC organized a department-wide forum on “Teaching Race,” which was well-attended by faculty and graduate students from all subfields, and included presentations addressing distinct challenges and approaches arising in each.

- 5) In Winter 2015 members of the DC and the department chair took part in a daylong symposium on "Promising Practices," organized by the OMA/D.
- 6) Beginning in January 2015, the DC each year has organized a departmental contingent to attend and take part in the MLK Day March and Rally.
- 7) During 2014-2015 a group of graduate students, with support from the Diversity Committee, formed a group they named People of Color Anthropologists (POCA), and organized several "epistemology mixers," designed as low-key, informal meet-and-greet events, to discuss ongoing experiments that unsettle scholarly perspectives.
- 8) The DC provided advice during our search for a half-time Undergraduate Advisor and full-time Program Assistant during fall 2015, and provided consultation in the development of our Vision, Mission and Hiring document.
- 9) In Fall 2015, following the department's temporary relocation to Condon Hall, the DC led a successful effort to enlist cooperation and secure agreement of all involved parties, and establish signage identifying gender-neutral bathrooms throughout the building.
- 10) The DC, in an effort led by Dr. Jean Dennison, led an effort to revise our departmental Diversity Plan in 2015, and succeeded in winning a GO-MAP graduate fellowship for the department, for the first time in several years.
- 11) During 2015-2016 Dr. Michael Perez, on behalf of the DC, worked with Associate Vice Provost Chadwick Allen to co-organize a workshop offering to all of the UW community an opportunity to learn from the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative, about questions and approaches to moving from "diversity" to "equity" and "anti-racism." The event was well-attended and much appreciated by all who attended.
- 12) In May 2016 the Diversity Committee organized a "Courageous Conversation" with professional facilitators, to introduce members of the Anthropology department to tools for engaging in discussions of difficult topics, and to begin a conversation about race and representation, following a controversy that erupted over a departmental e-mail list, concerning the design of an image designed by graduate students for a T-shirts that they hoped to sell. This "Courageous Conversation" was well attended, with over 50 faculty, students and staff taking part.
- 13) In June 2016 incoming Department Chair Patricia Kramer attended a "Leadership training" initiative offered through UW's Professional and Organizational Development office, on "Race, Bias and Dissonance."

Additional trainings and educational efforts taking place in the Department have included the following:

- 1) In December 2013, the Title IX Coordinator for the University of Washington was invited to give a presentation at the faculty meeting, on new Title IX regulations concerning pregnant and parenting students, and what is required to comply with them.
- 2) In April 2016 the department hosted a Suicide Prevention training. While not focused specifically on diversity, this training sensitizes participants to the difficulties that those around them may be facing, and equips participants with techniques and resources to intervene in supportive and life-saving ways. The training was attended by some 15 faculty, staff and graduate students, and was very much appreciated by all who took part.

- 3) In May 2016, Vice Provost Chad Allen was invited to attend our departmental faculty meeting and to speak to the faculty about his office's efforts with regard to recruitment and retention of an excellent and diverse faculty.

In its response to the 2010 review, the Graduate School Council noted that "Although important advances have been achieved in managing diversity, the Diversity Committee appears to be a lightning rod for unsettled issues." Significant strides have since been made toward increasing diversity among faculty, graduate students, staff and our undergraduate student population. The Diversity Committee is no longer the lightning rod that it once was. Issues of race and diversity remain touchpoints for heated debate, but these are no longer focused so specifically on the DC and its activities.

### Hiring

The Department of Anthropology received authorization in summer 2014, to conduct two faculty searches in sociocultural anthropology: a tenure-track position for a scholar focusing on Indigeneity in the Americas, and a tenure-track position for an anthropologist specializing in the study of Mainland Buddhist Southeast Asia. The Diversity Committee was consulted extensively, and the Excellence in Faculty Hiring Guidelines were followed with great care throughout both searches. We note, especially, that:

- 1) Both search committees met with Social Sciences Dean Judith A. Howard (and would have met with Associate Vice Provost Luis Fraga, had he not departed) before the search began, to discuss best practices with regard to recruitment of diverse and excellent candidates.
- 2) The job ads for both searches required that applicants submit a diversity statement as part of their initial application. This proved to be very informative and important in evaluation of candidates' vision and record on diversity. We also regarded this as an effective means of signaling to applicants the importance that we attach to diversity.
- 3) At intermediate stages after the applications had been received and reviewed, but before the committee had drawn up a short list, each search committee wrote an interim report on measures taken to address diversity in the search. This report was circulated to the faculty and discussed at a faculty meeting.
- 4) Both searches generated diverse applicant pools, and the candidates invited for campus visits reflected this diversity.
- 5) The tenure-track position in Indigeneity in the Americas was offered to and accepted by Dr. Jean Dennison, an excellent scholar who held a position as a senior Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, whose research addresses sovereignty and state formation in Native America, with a focus on her own Osage Nation community.
- 6) The tenure-track position in anthropology of Mainland Buddhist Southeast Asia was offered to and accepted by Dr. Jenna Grant, an excellent and promising scholar whose research has focused on biomedicine and science in Cambodia. Her record and vision on diversity were key features of her record that set her apart from other applicants, though she herself is not from an underrepresented minority background.

Separately from these two searches, the Department has also added several other faculty through a variety of other mechanisms. In every case, regardless how the hire came about, candidates were asked to provide a diversity statement.

Two Burke Museum Curators have been hired, each of whom holds a 50% faculty appointment in Anthropology, and each of whom has a very strong and impressive record of active involvement in promoting diversity.

- 1) Dr. Holly Barker joined our faculty in Autumn 2013 on a permanently funded half-time Lecturer line, jointly appointed as Curator of Asian and Pacific Ethnology at the Burke Museum. Her community-based research and her record of mentoring diverse students, particularly students from Pacific Islander communities and student-athletes, played a critical role in the Department's enthusiastic interest in her hire. Since taking up her position she has been very actively involved in diversity and outreach efforts, and has been part of a team of faculty that won a Jackson School of International Studies' Area and International Studies Grant entitled "Unmapping Global Studies: Oceania, Global Indigeneities and the Transformation of Area Studies," one of the major activities of which has been to develop a proposal for a new Oceanic and Pacific Islander studies minor at UW, with strong involvement of Anthropology.
- 2) Dr. Sven Haakanson joined our faculty in Autumn 2013 as Associate Professor WOT in a half-time position, jointly appointed as Curator of Native American Ethnology at the Burke Museum. His work as the Director for many years of the Alutiiq Museum in Kodiak, Alaska has included creative and successful efforts to use historical sources and museum collections to revive traditional arts, practices, and forms of knowledge, and teach them to children in his own Native Alaskan community and other Native communities. This trail-blazing work and its many contributions to diversity, figured prominently in discussions of the possibility of his joining our Department. Since arriving he has taken an active role in developing new courses that introduce traditional artisan and craftsmanship knowledge, as well as ethnoarchaeology and applied visual anthropology. He served on the hiring committee that helped bring Dr. Jean Dennison to UW, and has worked closely with a number of graduate and undergraduate students, including those from URM backgrounds. He has also actively worked to develop collaborative relationships with local Washington State Native communities. Dr. Haakanson was this year awarded tenure.

Several other faculty hires have taken place within the department since our last interim report in 2013. Consistent with our Excellence in Faculty Hiring guidelines, and UW policy, the candidates' record and vision on diversity has been considered carefully in each and every one of these hires:

- 3) Dr. Patricia Kramer, who had held a half-time Research Faculty position, was hired into an Associate Professor position with tenure. As a biological anthropologist, she contributes crucially to the treatment of diversity in our undergraduate curriculum through lower-level courses that introduce students to the complexity of human biological variation, and equip them to combat racism by thoroughly showing that the concept of "race" has no biological basis. Dr. Kramer has also been very active in promoting diversity efforts within the field of biological anthropology nationally; given the current demographic realities of that subfield, increasing the proportion of

women in biological anthropology remains an unfinished project, and efforts to increase the proportion of underrepresented minority scholars still have far to go. Dr. Kramer will soon begin a five-year term as Department Chair.

- 4) Dr. Radhika Govindrajan joined the department as a spousal hire, in connection with UW's efforts to recruit her husband Jayadev Athreya, to join the faculty of Mathematics. Dr. Govindrajan's research specialties are in anthropology of religion, human-animal relations, and South Asia. Her thoughtfulness on issues of diversity came through very clearly in her diversity statement, interview, job talk and materials, as reflected in the unanimous faculty support for her hire.
- 5) Recognizing the challenges of meeting the large and still-growing student demand for medical anthropology with our permanent faculty, the College in 2014 agreed to provide one year of funding to support a Lecturer in Medical Anthropology and Global Health (MAGH). A national search was conducted, which in fact even drew applicants internationally. Despite considerable outreach efforts the applicant pool did not include candidates who self-identified as members of U.S. underrepresented minorities, though one finalist is a person who lives with a serious disability and all evidenced thoughtful visions and extensive records on addressing diversity. Dr. Marieke van Eijk was hired to this position, bringing a strong record of research and teaching that attends to diversity in many dimensions, especially to issues concerning transgender health. Dr. van Eijk's position was renewed for one year when funding was secured to allow this, and has recently been renewed for another three-year term. Since arriving she has taught courses such as "Social Difference and Medical Knowledge" that centrally engage issues of diversity, and is developing new courses that address queer health, and class/access issues in U.S. health care.
- 6) In Spring 2015, when grant-related course buyouts for permanent faculty created both critical curricular need and a funding mechanism for hiring a one-year Lecturer position in Biocultural Anthropology, a national search was conducted. The pool of top-ranked applicants did include candidates who would have brought gender and/or ethnic diversity to the Biocultural faculty, but they accepted other offers. The position was offered to Dr. Alexander Hill, who submitted a thoughtful diversity statement and has won strong reviews from students for his sensitive handling of diversity issues in courses addressing human biocultural variation. This one-year position was recently renewed for a second year.
- 7) The Integrated Social Sciences (ISS) online degree-completion program recently conducted a national search to hire one or more Lecturer positions to three-year contracts. ISS is a self-sustaining program but does not have appointing authority, therefore faculty hired to that program must be appointed in an academic unit. It turned out that the top ranked candidate for that position, Dr. Megan Carney, is an anthropologist by training and already well known to many in the anthropology department, having previously taught courses for us as well as for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and having been appointed Affiliate Faculty in our department. Dr. Carney's application materials were shared with faculty, and she was asked to provide a diversity statement in addition to what had already been submitted; an ad-hoc committee was constituted and she was interviewed by Anthropology faculty, who voted unanimously to approve her appointment. Negotiations remain underway at present.

- 8) In winter 2016 the Biocultural faculty became aware of an opportunity to engage a Research Faculty with expertise in primatology that the program has lacked since the retirement, years ago, of Laura Newell-Morris. Research Faculty positions are non-tenure-eligible appointments that require the faculty member support their own salary through grants; such positions are unusual in the College of Arts & Sciences, though quite common in other parts of campus, especially the School of Medicine and the School of Public Health. A Research Faculty position in biocultural anthropology was discussed with department faculty, approved, and advertised; the only applicant was Dr. Lisa Jones-Engel, who is trained in anthropology with a research focus on disease transmission patterns at the human-primate interface, and who has led an active field-based research program studying human-monkey interactions with a focus on South Asia. Like all applicants Dr. Jones-Engel was asked to submit a diversity statement, and in it she spoke eloquently of her work promoting and supporting female scientists from developing countries where she has carried out research. Following an interview, faculty voted to approve Dr. Jones-Engel's appointment. An offer has been extended and is currently under negotiation.

The Department continues to work to improve and refine our policies and practices and ensure attention to both diversity and excellence in hiring. A significant development in this regard:

- 1) In Winter 2016 the faculty voted to approve a new Policy on the Delegation of Authority for Short-Term Hires. Such hiring primarily involves hiring postdoctoral lecturers on short-term contracts, as is necessary when faculty must change their teaching plans for various reasons (grant buyouts, medical leaves, etc). Recognizing that short-term contracts often open the door to longer-term engagements, our policy specifies that the Chair should consult with the Diversity Committee when hiring part-time lecturers.

#### ***Develop more intellectual ties across the sub-disciplines***

A number of activities served to enhance intellectual ties across the sub-disciplines, and others were intended to celebrate our successes and promote collegiality. The Graduate School Council noted that "Progress has been made among faculty regarding substantive and epistemological differences, but less so among the graduate students who largely remain isolated in their sub-disciplines." Several activities were designed to address these concerns, including the following:

- 1) Beginning-of-the-year social gatherings for faculty have been held each year, at the home of the Department Chair in Autumn 2013 and 2014. In 2015 a larger gathering that also included graduate students was held at Gasworks Park. These events have provided opportunities for friendly, informal social gathering of departmental personnel across subdisciplinary lines.
- 2) Our undergraduate program in Medical Anthropology and Global Health (MAGH) has been an unequivocal success. Building on that strength, and seeking to facilitate stronger intellectual connections among the MAGH faculty and graduate students – who span sociocultural and biocultural subfields – in Fall 2015 we piloted a 2-credit MAGH seminar series, with offerings at both graduate and undergraduate levels, which doubled as a public lecture series open to all who wished to attend. This series was well-received and brought a great deal of visibility to our

MAGH offerings; it will be repeated in Fall 2016. This time, we hope to build in additional opportunities for social interaction through informal receptions following some of the talks.

- 3) We also created a moderated listserv to circulate information about campus and community events, publications, and job opportunities of interest to MAGH students and faculty, including biocultural as well as sociocultural faculty. This list is low-traffic but remains active.
- 4) In February 2015 undergraduate anthropology majors involved with the Anthropology Society, together with graduate students, organized a day of activities and displays all around Denny Hall, that were designed to showcase and highlight all subfields of anthropology, in celebration of “National Anthropology Day” festivities organized by the American Anthropological Association. Similar efforts were organized around the newly-renamed “World Anthropology Day” in 2016.
- 5) In December each year, the graduate students have organized a Department-wide chili cook-off, held (with Departmental support) in the Burke Room of the Burke Museum. This is a fun event that has become a departmental tradition, well-attended by faculty and graduate students from all subdisciplines, which has served to foster collegial social connections.
- 6) Several members of our faculty were involved in a collaborative effort with colleagues at other institutions in the Puget Sound region, to organize the third “Cascadia Seminar in Medical Anthropology” at the University of Washington and Seattle University in Spring 2015, following on the first which was held at UW in 2011 and the second which was held at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver B.C. in 2013. This event drew participation from faculty and graduate students in both sociocultural and biocultural programs, who enjoyed several days of friendly and intense intellectual conversation with the speakers, with colleagues from elsewhere, and with each other. A fourth iteration is being planned for Spring 2017, to be held at Western Washington University in Bellingham.
- 7) Several recent hiring efforts in our Department have brought faculty whose work crosses subdisciplinary boundaries in various ways. For example, Dr. Haakanson’s ethnoarchaeological work on Native communities and his engagement with visual methods are of considerable interest to many graduate students and faculty in sociocultural anthropology; similarly, Dr. Jones-Engel’s research on human-animal interactions as related to infectious disease intersects with the interests of several faculty in sociocultural anthropology.
- 8) The Department has begun a new tradition of inviting all faculty and staff to come together for a special “Celebration of Milestones” luncheon in spring at the UW Club, to recognize and celebrate important milestones reached by members of our department – such as promotion, tenure, and retirement. In addition to honoring the individuals whose milestones we celebrate, this event affirms our unity as a community.
- 9) Graduate students have organized (with Departmental support) their own conferences each spring, billed as “Students Talking about Anthropological Research” (or STAR) conferences. These have taken different formats, with the most recent spring 2016 iteration featuring “pecha kucha” style presentations, and all involve food and socializing. These have been well attended by faculty and graduate students across all subfields, and have provided an excellent opportunity for dialogue.

- 10) Plans are currently being made to revive the “Epistemologies Seminar,” which for several years provided a forum for intersubdisciplinary conversation among faculty and graduate students. The seminar was discontinued when attendance dropped off, but all indications are that the need and desire to engage in such conversations has picked up once again, partly as a means of dispelling mutual misinformation and misunderstandings held by some faculty and graduate students about subfields other than their own, that surfaced in the course of recent e-mail discussions about race and representation.

### ***Mission, Vision, and Hiring Plan***

Beginning in the 2011-12 academic year, faculty in the Department of Anthropology engaged in a process of developing a shared Mission, Vision and Hiring Plan that involved revision of the Mission and Vision Statement for our Department from our 2010 Self Study, and developing a 5 year hiring plan. With pending retirements, it was clear that numerous new hires would be needed in order to maintain our undergraduate and graduate programs. Because of this, it was important to develop a substantial hiring plan. This process began at the subdiscipline level, and then was extended to a Department-wide plan. Faculty from each subdiscipline were asked to submit a Mission and Vision Statement and a plan for 3 hires. In developing the mission and vision statement, Bettina Shell-Duncan who was Chair at the time suggested considering the following items:

1. Diversity
2. Undergraduate instruction
3. Graduate program
4. Ties to other units
5. Topical breadth and focus
6. Geographic focus
7. Conceptual focus

It was suggested that in an initial meeting, discussion should focus on whether the faculty wanted to modify this list or add other items to this list. After that, the faculty were asked to generate a list of strengths of their graduate program. This was done in 3 ways: current strengths, strengths after future retirements, strengths if hires allow you to realize your future vision. It was important to consider the relative merits of building on current strengths versus expanding the focus. The hiring plan was intended to allow each program to meet its future vision.

The sub-disciplinary plans were reviewed by a working group made up of the advisory group (Don Grayson, Steve Goodreau, Lorna Rhodes), as well as the Chair and Associate Chair. This group synthesized the plans in light of Departmental goals and visions, and circulated it to the full faculty for review and feedback. Following minor revision, the plan was shared with the entire faculty, and slated for discussion and vote at the April 2012 faculty meeting. This plan was approved by a unanimous vote. In the years since then, the hiring plan has several times been revisited and updated in light of personnel changes (retirements, departures, and faculty hires) and developments in the field more broadly. Each time, the hiring plan has been strongly endorsed with little disagreement. While hiring was a



considerable source of contention in 2008, and became contentious again in 2015, the hiring plan itself was not in dispute.

Controversies arising during the faculty searches that took place in 2014-2015 made clear that one contributing factor was a certain ambiguity concerning the role of search committees, as these intersect with subdisciplinary faculty groups, on the one hand, and the department faculty as a single unit on the other. In our department as in the field of Anthropology more broadly, subdisciplines operate with considerable degree of intellectual as well as organizational independence. In our department, subfield faculty groups are where hiring requests originate, and it is through them that curriculum, graduate admissions and many other aspects of the department are organized. On the other hand, we do also all identify with the field of Anthropology, and at an organizational level the department faculty as a whole is the appointing unit (per the Faculty Code), and is responsible for judgments of all faculty in regard to merit reviews, tenure and promotion. So the question arose, whether the search committee reports to the subfield faculty (which then makes the hiring recommendation), or whether it solicits input from the subfield faculty and presents a recommendation to the faculty as a whole (which then votes on the matter).

During the 2015-2016 academic year, while no faculty search was underway, seemed an opportune time to try to achieve greater clarity and unity on this question. An ad-hoc committee that included representation from all subfields and included some members with significant administrative experience was appointed and charged to develop one or more recommendations to present to the faculty in response to specific questions. As part of this process, the committee was asked to research how these matters are handled in other social science departments at the University of Washington, and in other anthropology departments elsewhere, as well as what the Faculty Code requires. The committee brought three recommendations to the faculty for a vote in the spring (the first two responding to the specific questions that the committee was charged to address, the third added by the committee).

a. How should faculty search committees be composed?

A search committee should include at least one member from a subfield in the department different from the subfield making the hire, whenever possible. This member should have relevant geographic and/or topical expertise. To avoid workload imbalance, the chair should work to realign and reduce other service loads of members from other subfields.

*The faculty vote did not approve this recommendation.*

b. How should the job of the faculty search committee be defined?

A search committee should produce an unranked list of final candidates. That list first goes to the relevant subfield where it is voted on. Then a recommendation goes to the full faculty for a vote.

*The faculty vote approved this recommendation.*

c. Continuation of the Committee's work.

Because of the many important issues that still need to be resolved with the department hiring process to ensure that best practices are defined and followed, the committee recommends to the incoming chair that an Ad Hoc committee continues this work in hopes of finalizing a process as early as possible next year.

*The faculty vote approved this recommendation.*

These recommendations will be taken under advisement moving forward. This year, the College has announced that very few hires will be approved in 2016-2017 due to budget constraints, and no call for hiring requests was issued. The department has already been promised a hire in 2016-2017, in exchange for our agreement to accept Radhika Govindrajan as a spousal hire. As per the already-approved hiring plan, this next hire will be in Biocultural Anthropology.

**Workplace Assessment, Departmental Climate and GPSS Survey**

In our 2010 Self Study, we noted that in the last decade the Department of Anthropology has undergone major changes, partly reflecting epistemological changes in the field as a whole, partly emerging from demographic changes in our faculty, and partly imposed by unprecedented fiscal constraints. The demographic change stemmed from the loss of a number of faculty in the late 1990s and early 2000s that would now be at the full professor and potential leaders in our department. In the context of demographic shifts and shrinking resources, tensions over priorities in hiring and graduate support (partly centered on questions surrounding the fate of the environmental anthropology program, and partly focused on diversity issues) became pronounced enough that the department recognized the need for a process of collective reflection and (where necessary) conflict mediation. We took this as an opportunity to clearly identify the challenges we face and constructively engage them. In 2008 we hired an external consultant, Praxis HR, to conduct a three phase process: 1) to conduct a workplace assessment to identify problem areas in the Department of Anthropology, 2) to propose specific interventions to address problems, and 3) to advise on long-term strategic planning. We entered into this process with the following goals and guidelines:

- To develop internal skills and resources for constructively addressing localized conflicts;
- To keep clearly in view the institutional, structural issues that underlie specific points of conflict, with the aim of thinking collectively about how we might best address these challenges;
- To find ways of bringing into focus shared interests and common purpose, without trivializing very real differences in interest, perspective, and background;
- To cultivate ways of communicating and interacting, personally and intellectually, that presupposes the value of diversity and make it a source of creativity and strength in the department.

Our consultation with Praxis HR has ended, but we continue to actively employ the acquired skills and procedures related to goal setting, clarity in communication, and transparency in procedure. The Graduate and Professional Student Senate Committee completed a survey among graduate student in Anthropology in 2010, and repeated this survey in 2013. The survey indicated that progress had been made in improving the climate for graduate student. Improvements were seen in terms of providing opportunities for interaction across the subdisciplines, and the departmental climate was viewed as being generally supportive of diversity in terms of ethnicity, sexuality, and ability. The Department of Anthropology has continued and will continue efforts to maintain an inclusive, welcoming, and supportive environment.

In our department, as in the field of anthropology as a whole, attention to questions of diversity and equity is both a great strength, and a persistent point of conflict and contention. These two dimensions are related: it is often through processes involving conflict and contention that communities of scholars arrive at critical insights and innovations. The UW Department of Anthropology continues to engage issues of diversity and equity with seriousness and sincerity, and with notable success; at the same time, they continue to surface as areas of tension. In spring 2016, some graduate students leveled accusations of racism against the department. These emerged, as mentioned, in the context of discussions taking place primarily via e-mail, about a graduate-student group's T-shirt design that some considered racist and offensive. The medium of e-mail may have amplified these concerns, which also took on broader dimensions from how they intersected with other factors. These included, notably, local manifestations of a nationwide wave of student activism, with sharp criticism directed at Anthropology among other programs by student groups loosely affiliated with the Black Lives Matter movement. This coincided, in terms of timing, with severe funding cuts in the College of Arts & Sciences that have led to drastic reductions in the number of available TA positions for anthropology graduate students, creating new levels of anxiety and insecurity.

Faculty and leadership of the Department of Anthropology care deeply about the quality of graduate education and fully recognize the importance of climate and diversity issues. We will continue to work diligently to support all of our students and to improve our process and practices with the goal of achieving an excellent and inclusive program of graduate education.