

**University of Arkansas**  
**Department of Anthropology**  
**Graduate Assessment Report, 2020-2021**

## **I. Background**

The Department of Anthropology offers an MA and Ph.D., specializing in one of the three subdisciplines represented within the department – Cultural Anthropology, Archeology, and Biological Anthropology. MA and Ph.D. students' training and coursework are supervised by an advisor as well as a committee. After completing coursework and fulfilling the required number of hours for each degree, MA students may opt for a thesis, internship, or 36 hours of coursework. Ph.D. students are required to pass comprehensive exams overseen by the advisor and committee, defend a thesis proposal, and successfully complete and defend a thesis. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to participate in professional research organizations and conferences, procure extramural funding for research support, and publish research before completing the degree. Learning outcomes and means of assessment are presented below.

### *Learning Outcomes -- (Research/Teaching/Service)*

- Students will articulate research problems, potentials, and limits with respect to theory, knowledge, and practice within the field of Anthropology.
- Students will demonstrate skills in oral and written communication sufficient to publish and present work and to prepare grant proposals.
- Students will have a research experience that results in professional publication(s), thereby contributing to the expansion of knowledge.
- Students will demonstrate a mastery of skills and knowledge at a level required for college and university undergraduate teaching and assessment of student learning.
- Students will interact productively with people from diverse backgrounds as both leaders/mentors and team members with integrity and professionalism.
- Students will foster ethical and professional conduct.
- Students will demonstrate, through service, the value of their discipline to the academy and community at large.
- Students will have professional and specialized training so that they can move into careers in academic or non-academic tracks.

### *Assessment of Student Learning*

#### **Ph.D.**

- Students are required to complete coursework to meet Graduate School and Departmental requirements. Further course work will be supervised by the primary advisor, in consultation with the student's committee where appropriate, to ensure sufficient preparation for the completion of the dissertation.
- Students will successfully complete a written qualifying examination. Questions and writing prompts pertaining the students' subfield will be written and evaluated by the primary advisor in consultation with the students' advisory committee.
- Students will successfully complete a thesis proposal to present and defend in an oral examination. Content and presentation will be evaluated by their primary advisor and the students' advisory committee.
- Students will successfully write and defend their research in a dissertation.
- Presentation, content, and quality will be evaluated by their primary advisor and the

- students' advisory committee.
- Students involved in laboratory research will provide the required laboratory notes/documentation to their supervising faculty member. The supervising faculty member will rate the student's ability to communicate clearly in the laboratory environment.
- Students will successfully complete Teaching Assistant (TA) training under the supervision of the instructor of record.
- Students will complete a resume-update form annually to be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies at the end of the academic year.
- Students will be encouraged to present research results at professional conferences or other professional venues.

### **M.A.**

- MA students will complete one of three options available (Thesis, 36 Hour, Internship) to successfully attain a master's degree.
- M.A. students involved in laboratory research will provide the required laboratory notes/documentation to their supervising faculty member. The supervising faculty member will rate the student's ability to communicate clearly in the laboratory environment.
- Students opting for the 36-hour degree will submit a complete resume including performance in classes, teaching, and extra-class reading to their committee, which will evaluate the adequacy of the training and performance, as well as administer an oral evaluation for the award of an MA. Students opting for the thesis will submit a written thesis to the primary advisor and committee and defend the thesis through a presentation and oral examination. Students completing an internship will be required to meet graduate school and departmental requirements for coursework and hours, and the student's advisor and the committee will evaluate the student's performance in accordance with professional standards to award an MA.
- Students will successfully complete Teaching Assistant (TA) training under the supervision of the instructor of record.
- Students disseminate research results at professional conferences or other professional venues.

## **II. Results**

### **Enrollment (Spring 2022)**

PhD: 20 students

MA: 16 students

Total: 36 students

PhDs Awarded: 1

MAAs Awarded: 4

Students Advancing to candidacy: 3

Conference Presentations: 11

Publications: 2

Grants/Awards: 11

### **PhD Awarded:**

Yoakum, Caitlin, (Claire Terhune Advisor).

### **MA's Awarded**

Porter, Joshua (Amelia Villasenor Advisor)

Feezell, Randall (Kathleen Paul Advisor)

Thompson, Ethan (JoAnn D'Alisera Advisor)

Martinez, Toni (Ram Natarajan Advisor)

### **Notable Accomplishments:**

#### ***Publications:***

**Romero AN, Mitchell DR, Cooke SB, Kirchhoff CA, Terhune CE.** (2022) Craniofacial fluctuating asymmetry in gorillas, chimpanzees, and macaques. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 177(2):286-299.

Marion, J.S. & **Scanlan, J.** (2022). "Fashion and Gender in Superhero Comics and Films." In Eugenia Paulicelli, Veronica Manlow, & Elizabeth Wissinger (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Fashion Studies*, 382-390. Routledge.

#### ***Conference Presentations:***

Lucyna A. **Bowland**, Ashly N. **Romero** and Christa D. **Kelly**. Old questions, new methods: testing hypotheses for canine dimorphism in the evolution of anthropoid primates using phylogenetic analyses. American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Christa D. **Kelly**, Charles C. Roseman, Kathleen S. Paul, J. Michael Plavcan and Lucas K. Delezene. Sex-biased evolutionary constraints: how cross-sex genetic correlations and evolvability affect the evolution of canine size dimorphism. American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Ashly N. **Romero**, David R. Mitchell and Claire E. Terhune. Cranial Fluctuating asymmetry and reproductive fitness in the Cayo Santiago Rhesus macaques. American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Caitlin B. **Yoakum** and Claire E. Terhune. A survey of the inferior alveolar nerve and its corresponding bony canal and foramina in primates. American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Lesley H. **Eason**, Lucas K. Delezene and J. Michael Plavcan. Morphological variation in the femur of *Theropithecus oswaldi* from Koobi Fora and Olduvai Gorge. American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Erika M. **Matthews** and Todd C. Rae. Group size, dispersal sex, coalition sex, and female aggression influence the evolution of maxillary canine sexual mono-morphism in primates. American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Liam M. **Zachary**. Morphology of the Platyrrhine talus reflects differences in ankle mobility associated with positional behavior. American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Megan A. Holmes, Parker M. **Taylor**, Rocio Ramirez, Mariana Dutra Fogaca, Janine Chalk-Wilayto, Claire E. Terhune and Myra F. Laird. Ontogenetic changes in jaw leverage in tufted and untufted capuchins. American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Christa Kelly. Correlated responses or divergent evolution: perspectives on hominin canine evolution. Paleoanthropology Society

Ashley Romero. The role of social group and matriline on fluctuating asymmetry in female rhesus macaques. American Association of Anatomists

Ashley Romero. Skeletal asymmetry in the Cayo Santiago macaques. Cayo Jamboree Conference

### ***Grants/Awards:***

Alecia Abella: Benjamin Franklin Lever Fellowship

Paramita Choudhury: PEO International Peace Award for Women

Ashley Romero: AAA Graduate Poster Award Finalist

Ashley Romero: Summer Institute in Statistical Genetics (SISG) Scholarship

Ashley Romero: GSPC Travel Grant

Ashley Romero: GSIE Travel Grant

Gillian Steeno: Hester Davis Arkansas Archeological Society Training Program Scholarship

Liam Zachary: Anatomy Teaching Fellow, High Point University

Lucyna Bowland: University of Arkansas Graduate Dissertation Research Award, \$5000

Lucyna Bowland: Anatomy Teaching Fellow, High Point University

Christa Kelly: Anatomy Teaching Fellow, High Point University

### **Graduate Student Exit Interview Report**

This year the Department of Anthropology had five students graduate, four with an MA degree and one PhD. Of the five, one is graduating with no set plans, one is planning to teach English in Thailand, one is preparing to teach high school in Northwest Arkansas, one is assuming a position teaching anatomy in a medical school after having a post-doc in the department for one semester, and one is entering a PhD program to continue studies in anthropology.

Concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the Department and the student's experiences, all felt that the quality of the faculty was very strong, but all pointed to problems associated with the impacts of covid, and the

lack of courses associated with the small number of faculty in the department. There were not enough archeology or cultural classes. The former was especially associated with the loss of three archeology faculty in a relatively short period of time, but most students felt that the lack of course offerings made it difficult to fill departmental requirements and to get a strong background. One noted especially that mixed classes (undergraduate and graduate) were not adequate for graduate students because the material had to be watered down to the undergraduate level. Further, this same student noted that incoming students needed to be provided with background readings. One noted that there is no structure to develop a cohort of graduate students, and so there is a lack of opportunity to develop through interaction with other students. Three of four felt that the pay was difficult, putting students into poverty and requiring some students to work outside in order to sustain basic needs (rent and food), which obviously impacts the student's ability to study. One student especially felt that the pay is such that only students with outside support (parents, DAF or DDF, grants) can realistically fully engage in their education.

In terms of logistical support, most felt that overall equipment and space were adequate, and that faculty are supportive. Of note, the facility at Stonehouse was felt to be not only unwelcoming, inconvenient and "creepy", but also potentially dangerous, especially for female students during late hours as a consequence of its remote location. All students noted that Workday is problematic, with one describing it as "frustrating" and "horrifying."

One student felt that the quality of graduate students overall is mediocre, which presents problems for students wishing to learn through peer engagement. One also especially pointed out that there is an intimidating atmosphere among some students concerning political ideology. This student felt that some students are entering the program with a strong political, and ideological agenda and an attitude of cherry-picking material to support such an agenda as opposed to engaging in an academic exploration of different viewpoints. This student recommended the faculty strive to keep classroom atmospheres neutral and professional. This same student felt that they could not express their views in class, and that other students felt the same but were afraid to say anything.

In spite of these critiques, which were given mostly in the light of constructive criticism, all students said that apart from the impacts of covid, they had a positive experience in the department, and they felt that they were adequately trained for pursuing their endeavors.

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