

Learning Objectives for the Anthropology Major at TCNJ

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The Anthropology major is designed to be in alignment with the learning outcomes of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and of the TCNJ School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) and will be assessed in comparison to those outcomes. The TCNJ HSS Mission Statement reads:

“Grounded in the liberal arts, and focused on undergraduate programs and targeted graduate programs, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences provides a personalized, collaborative, and rigorous education in the humanities and social sciences that engages students at the highest level both within and beyond the classroom, as well as within and beyond a single discipline. We in HSS believe in the transformative power of a liberal arts education to develop analytical, critical, and creative thinkers, conscientious and active global citizens, and lifelong learners and leaders. In addition to providing a liberal arts grounding for all TCNJ students, our school empowers our diverse students, staff, and faculty to succeed in the careers that they undertake and to sustain and enhance their communities both locally and globally.” (<https://hss.tcnj.edu/school-resources/mission-vision-statements/>)

In keeping with the HSS mission statement, evaluating the Learning Outcomes of the Anthropology Major will follow the protocol already used by the Sociology and Anthropology department to evaluate the Sociology Major program and the Self Designed Anthropology Major program. All TCNJ academic departments and degree programs (“majors”) are required to complete an annual assessment in a seven-year cycle for the College’s Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (LOAC) and every Sociology & Anthropology department faculty member (including the anthropology faculty) has participated fully in this process. Given the long-time experience with this evaluation process, adding an annual LOAC assessment for the Anthropology Major will be relatively straightforward.

Learning Outcomes

The Learning Outcomes (LO) of Anthropology majors were developed in response to the mission of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences to “develop analytical, critical, and creative thinkers, conscientious and active global citizens” The Department of Sociology and Anthropology will, as it does for the Sociology major, regularly assesses its learning outcomes in regulation with HSS and Middle States policy according to the following categories:

Critical Thinking: Students will be able to abstract general propositions from textual, observational, and qualitative evidence; identify logical relations among general propositions, and test the applicability of these propositions against new evidence.

Concepts and Paradigms: Students will be able to explain anthropological understanding of culture, social structure, and social processes grounded in anthropological theory.

Application: Students will be able to connect Anthropology to their public and private lives-as members of families and organizations and as citizens of local, national, and global communities.

Research Methods: Students will be able to posit interesting and important anthropological research questions, analyze quantitative and/or qualitative data, interpret their findings and effectively communicate their results to appropriate audiences.

Communication: Students will be able to demonstrate an ability to write and speak logically and cogently, to convey ideas and research findings to large audiences and small groups, to listen to others and respond constructively, and to demonstrate leadership skills and collaboration skills.

Information Literacy: Students will be able to distinguish between scientifically grounded observation, logical proposition, anecdote, and opinion.

Annual Assessment Plans:

To preserve the Four Fields Approach to Anthropology, our department offers four introductory levels courses: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (ANT 110), Introduction to Physical Anthropology (ANT 111), Introduction to Archaeology (ANT 112), and Language and Culture (ANT 213). Syllabus review will include all sections of all four introductory classes; for paper reviews, only Anthropology majors will be included.

All Anthropology majors must currently take SOC 301: Socio-Cultural Theory and must at least one anthropological methods course: Human Osteology (ANT 361), Urban Ethnography (ANT 401), Archaeological Field Methods (ANT XXX), Faculty-Led Research (ANT 390), or Quantitative Research Methods (SOC 302). Anthropology majors may complete their capstone requirement through a thesis (ANT 493) or capstone course (ANT 499).

Year	Course Focus	Learning Goals Assessed
2022-23	ANT 110, ANT 111, ANT 112, ANT 213	Introductory Level: Concepts and Paradigms Application
2023-24	SOC 301	Intermediate Levels: Concepts and Paradigms Application Communication
2024-25	ANT 361, ANT 390, ANT 401, Field Methods	Intermediate Levels: Critical Thinking Social Research Methods

	(ANT ###), SOC 302 (ANT majors only)	Communication Information Literacy
2025-26	ANT 493/499	Advanced Level: All

Anthropology Major Assessment Strategy

Learning goals are assessed by teams of faculty, with assessment conducted by multiple faculty members, always including at least one who was not the assigned instructor for that course. Analysis of papers is done based on a rubric designed by the faculty members participating in the assessment (and is generally preceded by an explanation of the assignment by the faculty member(s) who were instructor(s) for the relevant courses. For these courses, the instructors will designate an assignment. Assessment rubrics will be included in appropriate reports. The review of introductory course syllabi will be undertaken to determine 1) how well Concepts and Paradigms are reflected in assigned readings; and 2) assignments designed to encourage Critical Thinking and Application.

Introductory Options include ANT 110, ANT 111, ANT 112, and ANT 213

Intermediate Methods Options include ANT 361, ANT 390, ANT 401, ANT XXX (Archaeological Field Methods), and SOC 302.

Capstone Courses include ANT 493 and ANT 499.

Learning Objectives	Assessed in	Assessment Strategy	Cycle
Critical Thinking	Introductory Options Intermediate Methods Options Capstone	Analysis of designated assignment in advanced courses	Methods: 2024-25 Capstone: 2025-26
Concepts and Paradigms	Introductory Options Intermediate Theory (SOC 301) Capstone	Syllabus review in introductory courses Analysis of designated assignment in advanced courses	Introductory: 2022-23 Theory: 2023-24 Capstone: 2025-26
Application	Introductory Options Intermediate Theory (SOC 301) Capstone	Syllabus review in introductory courses Analysis of designated assignment in advanced courses	Introductory: 2022-23 Theory: 2023-24 Capstone: 2025-26
Social Research Methods	Intermediate Methods Options Capstone	Analysis of designated assignment in advanced courses	Methods: 2024-25 Capstone: 2025-26
Communication	Intermediate Theory (SOC 301) Intermediate Methods Options Capstone	Analysis of designated assignment in advanced courses	Theory: 2023-24 Methods: 2024-25 Capstone: 2025-26
Information Literacy	Intermediate Methods Options Capstone	Analysis of final papers in 302, 499	Methods: 2024-25 Capstone: 2025-26