



Anthropology
Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan
May 2024

Faculty / Affiliated University College	Social Science	
Degrees Offered	B.A.	
Date of Last Review	2016-2017	
Modules Reviewed	Honours Specialization in Anthropology Specialization in Anthropology Major in Anthropology Major in Archaeology and Biological Anthropology Major in Linguistic Anthropology Major in Sociocultural Anthropology Minor in Anthropology Minor in Refugee and Migrant Studies Minor in Environment and Culture	
External Reviewers	Dr. Andrew Roddick, Department of Anthropology McMaster University	Dr. Andrea Walsh, Department of Anthropology University of Victoria
Internal Reviewer	Dr. Ken Yeung, Associate Dean, Faculty of Science	Braedan Lovie French Language, Literature & Social and Political Thought
Date of Site Visit	March 10 & 11, 2025	
Date Review Report Received	March 30, 2025	
Date Program/Faculty Response Received	Program: May 5, 2025 Faculty: May 7, 2025	
Evaluation	Good Quality	
Approval Dates	SUPR-U: June 4, 2025 ACA: September 9, 2025 Senate (for information): September 19, 2025	
Year of Next Review	2032-2033	
Progress Report	June 2028	

Overview of Western's Cyclical Review Assessment Reporting Process

In accordance with Western's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a summary of the cyclical review, internal responses, and assessment and evaluation of the Anthropology Program delivered by the Faculty of Social Science.

This FAR considers the following documents:

- the program's self-study brief;
- the external reviewers' report;
- the response from the Program; and
- the response from the Dean, Faculty of Social Science.

This FAR identifies the strengths of the program and opportunities for program enhancement and improvement, and details the recommendations of the external reviewers – noting those recommendations to be prioritized for implementation.

The Implementation Plan details the recommendations from the FAR that have been selected for implementation, identifies who is responsible for approving and acting on the recommendations, specifies any action or follow-up that is required, and defines the timeline for completion.

The FAR (including Implementation Plan) is sent for approval through the Senate Undergraduate Program Review Committee (SUPR-U) and ACA, then for information to Senate and to the Ontario Universities' Council on Quality Assurance. Subsequently, it is publicly accessible on Western's IQAP website. The FAR is the only document from the undergraduate cyclical review process that is made public; all other documents are confidential to the Program, Faculty of Social Science, and SUPR-U.

Executive Summary

Anthropology at Western began in 1970 as an undergraduate program within the Department of Geography. The Department of Anthropology was established in 1972 and began to offer a three-year general BA and a four-year Honours Degree in Anthropology. As the department evolved, the four-field approach remains at the core of the program's vision of anthropology, with consistent course offerings and areas of study in what have historically been the four major subfields of the discipline: Archaeology, Biological Anthropology, Linguistic Anthropology, and Sociocultural Anthropology. In 2023-2024, the total number of students enrolled in Anthropology modules was 126.

Guided by the Undergraduate Affairs Committee, the self-study process included revising program learning outcomes, undergoing both curriculum mapping and Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) exercises with all members of the program. In addition, day-long retreats were held in May 2022 and May 2024 at which program changes were reviewed, program data was examined, a shared visioning exercise took place, along with discussions about key program goals. Deliberations were informed by student focus group data and dedicated discussions with students about professional development and alumni about their program experiences and employment direction.

The external reviewers shared a positive assessment of the Anthropology Program. They offer seven recommendations with considerations for further enhancement.

Strengths and Innovative Features Identified by the Program

- The program offers a balanced four-field approach that distinguishes it from other Canadian programs.
 - Rooted in a holistic vision of the diversity and complexity of humans and our biological relatives, as well as the breadth of theoretical and methodological approaches.
- Faculty members maintain leadership roles in national and international scholarly associations, conduct international field projects, and have received prestigious awards including the CASCA Labrecque-Lee Book Prize and recognition from the American Sociological Association.
- Weekly “Brain Trust” admin meetings enable proactive addressing of both operational and long-term issues.
- Initiatives that connect alumni with current students to transfer workplace skills and enhance career opportunities.
- Strong experiential learning components including hands-on work, community engagement, work-study placements and USRIs.
- Access to extensive specialized lab resources with cutting-edge technology both and off campus.

- Strong Focus on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Decolonization demonstrated by the: 1) creation of one of Western's first EDIDA Committees; 2) dedicated curriculum addressing colonialism, social inequality, and racism; 3) engagement with Indigenous communities including - Western University's Missing Children Working Group, formed at the request of Chippewas of the Thames First Nation; and, partnership with Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation in their search for unmarked graves on the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School site.
- Student surveys and focus groups reveal high satisfaction with program content, experiential learning opportunities, faculty responsiveness, and program flexibility.
- Excellent student engagement opportunities (e.g., via the Undergrad Anthro Society, varied lecture series).
- Recently launched Western Ethnography Collaboratory (WE-ColLab), an ethnography lab housed in our department that will offer a site for sustained collaboration on issues of ethnographic methods, research, and writing.

Concerns and Areas of Improvement Identified and Discussed by the Program

- Program Sustainability Challenges:
 - Faculty retirement could threaten the Inter-Faculty Linguistics Program's sustainability and four-field approach, with archaeology and biological anthropology (fields linked to enrollment growth) most affected.
 - Reductions in Limited Duties instructors and graduate students limit the department's ability to offer large-enrollment courses with TAs.
- Student Feedback:
 - Request for more labs and research opportunities.
 - Adequate prerequisites for upper-year courses to ensure student preparedness.
 - Reviewing recent changes that opened anthropology courses to students with limited disciplinary background; explore the addition of pre-requisites to upper-year courses.
 - Expansion of outreach efforts to promote anthropology on campus and to provide students with professional development.
- Current Areas of Consideration:
 - Consolidate modules and restructure curriculum to clarify the four-field approach, including development of a combined Major in Sociocultural and Linguistic Anthropology.
 - Expand strengths in linguistic anthropology, particularly in language revitalization, potentially through collaboration with Indigenous Studies.

Review Process

As part of the external review, the review committee, comprising two external reviewers, an internal faculty reviewer, and an internal student reviewer were provided with Volume I and II of the self-study brief in advance of the scheduled review and then met in-person over two days with the:

- Vice-Provost (Academic Programs)
- Acting Vice-Provost (Academic Planning, Policy and Faculty Relations)
- Director of Academic Quality and Enhancement
- Associate University Librarian
- Dean, Faculty of Social Science
- Associate Dean (Undergraduate Studies), Faculty of Social Science
- Department Chair
- Undergraduate Chair
- Administrative Staff
- Program Faculty
- Program Students

Following the virtual site visit, the external reviewers submitted a comprehensive report of their findings which was sent to the Program and Dean for review and response. Formative documents, including Volumes I and II of the Self-Study, the External Report, and the Program and Decanal responses form the basis of this Final Assessment Report (FAR) of the Anthropology Program. The FAR is collated and submitted to SUPR-U by the Internal Faculty Reviewer with the support of the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.

Summative Assessment – External Reviewers’ Report

External reviewers noted *“The program has an excellent reputation in Canada and is recognized within the greater university as a strong, steady and vibrant program with faculty who are committed teachers and highly productive scholars.”*

Strengths of the Program

- Unique four-fields approach to Anthropology, one of few Canadian departments maintaining strength in each subdiscipline.
- Research and teaching strengths offer students enriched learning through smaller courses, experiential opportunities, and research engagement.
- Experiential learning runs through a broad swath of student experiences that are in high demand (e.g., first-year labs and tutorials, dedicated research methods

courses, individual/ group research projects, lab volunteering opportunities, USRI).

- Active Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigenous Strategies (EDIIS) committee effectively embedding these principles into curriculum and providing financial support for equity-deserving students.
- Dedicated, engaged, and competent team of office and program staff providing excellent support.
- Proactive planning has enhanced departmental efficiency – demonstrated ability to produce actionable planning documents with nimble and strategic responses to the fast-paced changing university budgetary and program landscapes.
- Active in local community-engaged work, including Indigenous language revitalization and vital community-led collaborations with local nations regarding the search for missing graves at residential schools.

Prospective Improvements for the Program to Consider

- Resources
 - Manage the impact of recent and upcoming faculty retirements and reduced TA allocation to ensure the continuous delivery of a high-quality Anthropology Program with its four-field approach. (*Associated with Recommendation #4*)
 - Assess the parameters associated with the continuity of the Inter-Faculty Linguistics Program on the linguistic field of the Anthropology Program. (*Associated with Recommendation #1*)
- Communications
 - Strengthen information sharing in the department, including regular communication to students about Department activities, special learning opportunities, course availability and advertisement for courses. (*Associated with Recommendation #3*)
 - Improve University-level communication regarding program enrolments and funding. (*Associated with Recommendation #3*)
 - Enhance information about the linguistics stream and strengthen connections between linguistics and other subfields through degree requirements and course scheduling. (*Associated with Recommendation #1 and #3*)
- Curriculum Improvements
 - Explore additional community-engaged local field schools through existing faculty research relationships in linguistics and archaeology. (*Associated with Recommendation #1*)
 - Initiate dialogue Indigenous Studies regarding a core Indigenous Studies requirement for Anthropology graduates. (*Associated with Recommendation #1*)
 - Explore further integration of digital anthropology into the curriculum through existing faculty strengths. (*Associated with Recommendation #2*)

- Further utilize Library staff to support navigation of AI technologies in teaching and assessment development. (*Associated with Recommendation #5 and #7*)
- Shore up the Department's potential to contribute to the Museum of Ontario Archeology and reaffirm this long-standing relationship. (*Associated with Recommendation #6*)
- Review large enrolment classes with no prerequisites, as students report encountering the same introductory material across multiple courses.

Summary of the Reviewers' Recommendations and Program/Faculty Responses

The following are the reviewers' recommendations in the order listed by the external reviewers.

Reviewers' Recommendations	Program/Faculty Response
<p>Recommendation #1 - Maintain the four-fields approach, strengthen teaching connections with local First Nations and amplify linguistics as a subfield.</p> <p>a) <i>New Second year Course</i> - Increase student knowledge and acumen training regarding local First Nations peoples' histories, presents and futures.</p> <p>b) <i>Linguistic Requirement</i> - Consider mechanisms or even a requirement for linguistic components earlier in students' programs to strengthen the connection between linguistics and the rest of anthropology.</p> <p>c) <i>Mandatory Indigenous Studies Course</i> - Consider a mandatory Indigenous Studies course. This recommendation responds to students' voicing that there is real demand for such a course for ANTH majors/ honours.</p> <p>d) <i>Field schools</i> - Explore the potential of uniting language revitalization in local nations with a linguistics field school.</p>	<p>Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. This idea was presented at a recent department meeting, and will be further discussed at a retreat to be held in May 2025. This recommendation aligns with conversations the department has had in recent years regarding possible courses that will showcase the four-field approach and/or draw on a team-teaching. If warranted, the Undergraduate Chair and Department Chair will work to create any new courses and integrate them into the teaching plan. 1b. The Department is actively working on ways to integrate Linguistic Anthropology with other aspects of the program. This includes the creation of a new Major in Sociocultural and Linguistic Anthropology and changing some aspects of other modules. The program recently withdrew the course ANTH 1027 (to now be taught as LING 1027). 1c. At the upcoming departmental retreat in May 2025, the program will explore whether to include a requirement in the modules for 1) a specific course; 2) a selection of courses; 3) find alternative ways to integrate courses on Indigenous Studies more fully into the program. The Undergraduate Chair will compile a full list of current courses in anthropology that are cross listed with Indigenous Studies (IS) as well as a list of courses in IS that could be included in the modules. 1d. The program sends information about field school opportunities to students throughout each academic year. At this time, the department cannot commit to regular offerings of its own field schools, as this depends on many factors, including funding and supervisory capacity. In the past, the program has had a local archaeological field school focused on Ontario Archaeology, but continued offering of this course depends on future hiring. The program has courses that allow students to take field schools offered elsewhere and submit work to the department for credit. <p>Faculty: The Dean's Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Supports the department's discussion of this recommendation and agrees that it would strengthen the four-field approach at the undergraduate level. 1b. Supports the module and course changes that are already underway. 1c. Applauds the department's long-standing commitment to delivering Indigenous content and cross-listing courses with Indigenous Studies; and, the decision made by the department regarding making such content mandatory.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1d. Work with the department on finding solutions pertaining to the accessibility of field schools within resource and budgetary constraints.
<p>Recommendation #2 - New Teaching-Research Areas Explore/highlight strategies for program enhancement via existing and evolving department strengths. For instance, 1) medical anthropology and a focus on the biocultural determinants of health; 2) the anthropology of colonial legacies; and 3) digital anthropology or science and technology studies (STS) – all appear to be areas of potential growth.</p>	<p>Program: Continue departmental level discussions regarding the strategic planning and core areas of current and future teaching and research expertise – this could include developing new courses in areas such as science and technology studies, climate-change, digital archaeology, material culture, and medical anthropology. This remains an active area being worked on, and these are all key areas for growth identified as part of the departmental strategic visioning.</p> <p>Faculty: The Dean's Office supports the department's efforts to expand in these fields, especially through the development of new courses.</p>
<p>Recommendation #3 - Communications a) Undergraduate administrator and Undergraduate Chair should have regular meetings. b) Develop a guidance document or Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for staff positions, especially in moments of transition. c) Rapid dissemination of granular student data from central administration would greatly assist staff in supporting students and program development. d) Consider new approaches to marketing courses and availability both in-class, on-line, and perhaps in physical spaces throughout the department. e) An electronic newsletter featuring available classes, events, student success stories/profiles/ photography, could be developed by the</p>	<p>Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3a. The Undergraduate Chair will establish clear lines of communication, including regular weekly meetings between the UG Chair and UG administrator. 3b. The Department Chair has created a guidance document for the department, which was shared with all program administrators. This document has also been posted to the department's intranet. The Undergraduate Chair has drafted a guidance document for the undergraduate program and will work with the undergraduate Program Administrator to revise and expand it. These guidance documents would be "living documents" that would be revised over the next year, and aid in the transition of a new Department Chair, Undergraduate Chair, and Graduate Chair in 2026. 3c. The Department Chair and Undergraduate Chair continue to make use of the data made available through the IPB Dashboard, as well as data collected by the Department Administrator and Undergraduate Program Administrator to support program development and students. 3d. The Department is committed to continue working to expand promotional efforts and to host outreach events such as High School Anthropology Day. In recent years, the program has intensified efforts to market courses to students, by providing slides to instructors that highlight upcoming courses, and to external units by providing flyers to program counsellors. 3e. The Department Chair will explore the possibility of a newsletter or other communication sharing efforts, with a focus on both current students and alumni. <p>Faculty: The Dean's Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3a. Welcomes the efforts planned to enhance communication.

<p>Anthropology student association and a faculty mentor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3b. Appreciates the Chair's immediate and strong response - a guidance document has already been developed. • 3c. Supports the department's efforts to mine data to improve program efficiency and will provide additional data as needed. • 3d. Welcomes and supports the department's outreach activities. • 3e. Encourages the department to seek advice from other departments who have been using a newsletter as a form of communication with faculty, staff, students and alumni.
<p>Recommendation #4 – Maintaining Capacity in Archaeology Funding for the hiring of at least one LT position to maintain what is presently an area of high enrolment in the department (archaeology/ bioarchaeology) to sustain program strengths.</p>	<p>Program: The need for this position was noted in the self-study. The Department Chair continues to discuss this with the Dean of the Faculty of Social Science. An LT position in archaeology is in the current Faculty budget; if it is not granted this year, the program will continue to advocate for this position.</p> <p>Faculty: The Dean's Office recognizes the need for an LT as outlined in this recommendation and has made a request in the most recent budget submission. At the timing of this report no response was received regarding this request.</p>
<p>Recommendation #5 – Leveraging Library staff and expertise An annual check-in/workshop for faculty with librarians about library resources: 1) for teaching through Western's library collections to support existing experiential learning foci; and 2) alongside other on campus resources, using the librarians' expertise to stay abreast of advancing use of AI in teaching and research.</p>	<p>Program: The department will continue to explore connections with the library and to draw on the expertise of library staff. In the past, library staff participated in facilitating workshops on program learning outcomes and strategic planning. The department already has an annual departmental retreat and is reluctant to commit to an annual ongoing event with the library staff. The recently established AI Committee, as well as the Department Chair, Undergraduate Chair, and EDIDA committee will explore ways to draw on library resources and expertise on issues related to AI, teaching, etc.</p> <p>Faculty: The Dean's Office applauds and supports the department's efforts in this area, especially regarding AI.</p>
<p>Recommendation #6 – Museum of Ontario Archaeology Determine the potential of the ongoing relationship between the Department and the Museum regarding future arrangements for student training and faculty research. Determine a clear trajectory for the Department's commitment to Ontario archaeology vis-a-vis the rich resources and existing</p>	<p>Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program inadvertently omitted to emphasize its relationship with the Museum of Ontario Archaeology (MOA) in the self-study. The University's and Department's primary association with the Museum of Ontario Archaeology (MOA) is through Lawson Chair (jointly appointed by the University and the MOA). In addition, a faculty member is now on the Board of Directors and many graduate theses utilize collections at the MOA, so the undergraduate connections tend to garner less attention. • The program has a significant relationship with the MOA on the undergraduate front. The local field schools, mentioned above, and other undergraduate courses have often been hosted at the MOA. In

<p>investment (both in human resources and technology) at the Museum of Ontario Archaeology.</p>	<p>addition, each year the MOA hires on campus work study students, host many student volunteers along with several class visits, often funded by the student donation fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is worthy of note that the Executive Director of the MOA is a graduate of the MA program and is keen to build more connections with the Department and University. <p>Faculty: The Dean's Office fully supports the strong relationship with the MOA.</p>
<p>Recommendation #7 - Library Consider the library and associated archives as a resource on campus for experiential learning in consultation with librarians.</p>	<p>Program: The department will continue to draw on the library as a resource and explore ways to use library spaces and resources in courses and in other programming (e.g., workshops). In most cases, these connections with the library resources are handled directly by department members (e.g., instructors teaching courses, faculty organizing events, working with special collections and the archives etc.).</p> <p>Faculty: The Dean's Office fully supports the department's efforts in this area.</p>

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan provides a summary of the recommendations that require action and/or follow-up. In each case, the Program Chair, and the Dean of the Faculty are responsible for enacting and monitoring the actions noted in Implementation Plan. Of note, recommendations specific to hiring are outside the scope of this review process – proposed actions below are in support of prioritizing and planning.

Recommendation	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
Recommendation #1 - Maintain the four-fields approach, strengthen teaching connections with local First Nations and amplify linguistics as a subfield. a) <i>New Second year Course</i> b) <i>Linguistic Requirement</i> c) <i>Mandatory Indigenous Studies Course</i> d) <i>Field schools</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Continue discussion about possible program courses that showcase the four-field approach and/or draw on team-teaching, at the May 2025 Faculty retreat. Begin developing a plan, if warranted integrate new courses into the program's teaching plan. 1b. Integrate Linguistic Anthropology with other aspects of the program (e.g., creation/merge of new Major, Centre Intro to Linguistics in program requirements). 1c. Continue enhancing the delivery of Indigenous content - through cross-listing courses with Indigenous Studies; and, the possibility of a dedicated course requirement. 1d. Devise solutions pertaining to the accessibility of field schools within resource and budgetary constraints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate Chair Dean's Office 	By July 2026
Recommendation #2 - New Teaching-Research Areas For instance, 1) medical anthropology and a focus on the biocultural determinants of health; 2) the anthropology of colonial legacies; and 3) digital anthropology or science and technology studies (STS).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore pathways to expand core areas of current and future teaching and research expertise, which could include developing new courses in areas such as science and technology studies, climate-change, digital archaeology, material culture, and medical anthropology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate Chair 	By June 2027

<p>Recommendation #3 - Communications a) Undergraduate administrator/Chair regular meetings. b) Guidance document for staff positions. c) Rapid dissemination of student data. d) New approaches to marketing of courses availability. e) An electronic newsletter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3a. Establish clear lines of communication, including regular weekly meetings between the UG Chair and UG administrator. • 3b. Recently drafted guidance document will be constantly updated and will aid in the transition of a new Department Chair, Undergraduate Chair, and Graduate Chair in 2026. • 3c. Continue to use data from IPB Dashboard and data collected by the Department to support program development and students. • 3d. Continue expanding promotional efforts such as: a) hosting outreach events like High School Anthropology Day; b) providing slides to instructors that highlight upcoming courses; c) providing flyers to program counsellors of external units. • 3e. Seek advice from other departments that are already using newsletter as a form of communication with faculty, staff, students and alumni. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate Chair • Department Chair • Dean's Office 	<p>By June 2026</p>
<p>Recommendation #4 – Maintaining Capacity in Archaeology Funding for the hiring of at least one LT position to maintain what is presently an area of high enrolment in the department (archaeology/ bioarchaeology) to sustain program strengths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue advocating the need for this position. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ An LT position in archaeology is in the current Faculty budget; if it is not granted this year, the program will continue prioritizing this position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Chair • Dean's Office 	<p>Follow-up in June 2028 progress report</p>
<p>Recommendation #5 & #7 – Library Expertise Consider the library and associated archives as a resource on campus for experiential learning and AI developments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore ways the program can draw on the expertise of library staff and resources on issues related to AI, teaching, use library spaces and special collections and the archives, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate Chair • EDIDA committee • AI Committee 	<p>Follow-up in June 2028 progress report</p>
<p>Recommendation #6 – Museum of Ontario Archaeology (MOA) Determine the potential of the ongoing relationship between the Department and the Museum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to enhance the relationship with the MOA by exploring the possibility of – 1) including via museum displays in the department; and 2) hosting public outreach activities in association with the MOA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate Chair 	<p>Follow-up in June 2028 progress report</p>