

From: Konane Martinez
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2017 11:09 AM
To: Michael Hughes <mhughes@csusm.edu>
Cc: Criselda Yee <cjee@csusm.edu>
Subject: FW: ANTH 280

RE: ANTH 280

Here is anthropology's response to our GEC's comments on our course.

Archaeology is a science that utilizes the theoretical, methodological, and analytical tools of the natural and physical sciences. Theories and approaches within archaeological science include such fields as geoarchaeology, zooarchaeology, paleoethnobotany, genetics, and isotopic and molecular archaeology. Archaeology includes diverse scientific approaches including geoarchaeology and the development of landscapes, the applications of soil micromorphology to paleosols and archaeological settlements, zooarchaeological investigations, especially concerning food procurement and taphonomic aspects, archaeobotany and the origins and spread of agriculture, the isotopic analyses of human and animal material to study palaeodiet and palaeoclimate, chemical analyses of archaeological materials, including ceramic residue analyses, and archaeogenetic studies. Some of the scientific techniques employed in archaeological investigation include physical and chemical dating methods for artifact analysis, mathematical methods for data treatment (including computer-based methods), remote sensing and geophysical survey techniques for buried features, and conservation sciences involving the study of decay processes and the development of new methods of conservation.

In response to GEC's implication that the course is better suited for SS or Humanities, the Anthropology Department informs the committee that physical Archaeology is a science in its own right, and notes that just as, for example, biology does not have to include comprehensive overviews of principles of chemistry in its courses, the anthropology department should not have to do the same for archaeology, but we have been asked to do so by the GEC. It appears that the GEC disregards six pages explaining archaeology as a science and instead quotes (as evidence that archaeology is not science) from a section in the form that addresses CSUSM Specific Programmatic Goal question #1 "how the course provides exposure to and critical thinking about issues of diversity." See below quotes from GEC and course author.

GEC: "... while scientific methods were used, they weren't the main drive of the course. On page 5, it states

ANTH...archaeology is the study of human past, and how human societies came to be the way they are today. Through the study of archaeology, students are exposed to the variety of ways people lived their lives."

Lastly, the questions in Part A never clearly state what physical sciences are, just that the course explain: physical principles, theories, areas of application and limitations; apply the discipline's customary methods to solve problems through data collection evaluation of evidence, etc., an understanding of the scientific method, and ethics related to the field of research. Anthropology's answers to the these questions lay this out comprehensively, yet GEC does not address why they are insufficient. In the end, the justification GEC uses to reject B credit for the course is not clear.

The Anthropology department reiterates that Archaeology is a science in all respects of the definition of scientific inquiry.