


Memorandum

To: Tom Hellie President, Linfield College
CC: Barbara Seidman, Dean of Faculty
From: Jeff D. Peterson, Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology 
Date: 3/28/2006
Re: Department Introduction

**Department Members: Rob Gardner, Assistant Professor of Sociology
Thomas Love, Professor of Anthropology
Joel Marrant, Professor of Anthropology
Amy Orr, Associate Professor of Sociology
Jeff Peterson, Associate Professor of Sociology, Chair**

The Sociology department became a two-discipline department in 1979 when Joel Marrant joined the staff as its first full-time anthropologist. An anthropology major was created after Tom Love was hired in January of 1983 as an Assistant Professor of International Studies and Anthropology. The gradual melding and curricular revision of the two disciplines was initiated in the mid 1980s and accelerated with the retirement of two senior sociology professors. The younger sociologists who joined the faculty led the department's program away from its descriptive, social work-type orientation towards a more theoretically inclined character, bringing the curriculum into line with contemporary models. By 1996, the SOAN (the name by which the department is widely known on campus) program had taken its present shape, with introductory courses in the different disciplines and then a combination of disciplinary courses (SOC, ANT) and interdisciplinary courses (SOA) at the 200, 300, and 400-levels. To maximize resources and staff potential, all of the key courses for both anthropology and sociology majors (Research Methods, Social Theory, the Senior Proseminar, and 400-level capstone seminars) had SOA designations. This convergence of sociological interests, topics, and theories was most easily realized with the social anthropological wing of anthropology. Although there are some issues that we feel need to be addressed (discussed below), this interdisciplinary approach is seen as being a particular strength of the department.

Members of the department have a high commitment to professional development and a high involvement with students; we usually have about 45-50 active majors listed, and graduate around 20 Sociology and Anthropology students per year. We see an active scholarly career, including publications in scholarly journals, participation in professional societies, and representing Linfield to the broader community through our expertise, as being central to our departmental ethos. We also see this engagement as being critical to quality education, both in and out of the classroom. Furthermore, the department has a high level of engagement with students. We involve them in research projects (Century Farm Project, Latinos in the Willamette Valley Project) and also take students to professional conferences, such as the Pacific Sociological Association Meetings and Applied Anthropology Meeting. Depending on the year, we have taken anywhere from 5 to 13 students to professional regional meetings.

We also are committed to supporting the Linfield Curriculum and to service on campus. In recent years, members of the department have been on the Curriculum Committee, Enrollment Retention and Student Life Committee, chaired the Benefits and Budget Committee and chaired the Faculty Executive Council. In addition to participation in faculty governance, members have served on several