



CAREER READINESS COMMISSION

Riall Nolan

rwnolan@purdue.edu

Elizabeth K. Briody

elizabeth.briody@gmail.com



Outline

1. The Commission:
Who, What, Why, and How
2. Current Projects
3. Next Steps

WWNA 2021: Why the World Needs Anthropologists
September 10-12, 2021, Prague, Czech Republic

The Commission: Who, What, Why and How

- ▶ **Who** ▶ An affinity group of more than 70 anthropologists (practitioners, instructors, students), many of whom are professional association leaders
- ▶ **What** ▶ Improve training in BA, MA, and PhD programs by incorporating practice scholarship, internships, and professionalization skills to ready students for careers in business, non-profits, and government
- ▶ **Why** ▶ Practice is growing, academia is shrinking, and anthropological training is not keeping pace
- ▶ **How** ▶ Provide resources, models, training, encouragement, and support to anthropology instructors

Current Projects and Timeline

We have **six current projects**. For each, we have a **four-phase process**.



Phase One is brainstorming: what information do we need; and how will we get it?



Phase Two is discovering: collecting and analyzing data.



Phase Three will involve testing and problem solving, in collaboration with our stakeholders.



Phase Four will be devoted to promoting and implementing our ideas.

Our Current Projects:

1. A Delphi Survey of Practitioners
2. Collection of Existing Training Material
3. Identifying Work Sector Differences
4. Documenting Departmental Initiatives
5. Identifying Key Organizations
6. Charting the Future of Practice

Group 1: Delphi Survey of Practitioners

This group wants to know what might be improved in academic training that will equip anthropologists to 1) find a job in practice, and 2) be able to do that job effectively.

It designed a Delphi survey and identified a large group of practitioners for its sample, completing the Phase 1 work. It has since distributed the survey and is collating the responses.

Group 2: Compilation of Existing Training Materials

This group seeks to identify and collect existing resources that are oriented to practice (e.g., articles, syllabi, podcasts). Some pertain to the research and other types of work that anthropologists do in business, non-profits, and government. Other resources explore patterns related to academic anthropology programs, experiential learning opportunities, job search preparation and beyond.

Group 3: Identifying Work Sector Differences and Similarities

This group has two focus areas: 1) practitioner experiences and 2) hiring practices. It plans to collect practitioner narratives relating to their work sector, job search, tools and methods used in their jobs, and career paths. Information on organizational hiring practices will also be gathered, primarily through online research and possibly surveys or interviews with employers.

Group 4: Departmental Practice Initiatives

Members of this group will gather accounts of both successful and unsuccessful efforts to introduce an emphasis on practice into departmental offerings. Initially, their plan targets undergraduate programs that have shown an inclination toward applied training. Separately, a University of North Texas course will collect narratives from a cross-section of graduate programs.

Group 5: Organizations with Potential to Influence Practitioner Training

The focus of this group is three-fold: 1) college and university anthropology clubs, 2) concurrent education programs teaching anthropology in high schools and colleges, and 3) potential funders of applied anthropology research and work. Their plan is to survey and/or hold discussions with relevant individuals.

Group 6: Charting the Future of Practice

This group wants to look at two related aspects of the world in front of us:

- 1) The composition of the practitioner community in the future, with a view to promoting as much diversity and inclusion as possible; and
- 2) The world of work in the future, and specifically those areas where anthropologist practitioners can make a substantial and positive contribution.

To Conclude:

This is a broad and ambitious undertaking, emergent by its very nature. The work of the Commission will develop and evolve as it proceeds.

If you are interested in contributing, or simply in knowing more, please get in touch with us:

Riall Nolan

rwnolan@purdue.edu

Elizabeth K. Briody

elizabeth.briody@gmail.com