CAREER READINESS COMMISSION

Elizabeth K. Briody and Riall W. Nolan

Getting Anthropology Out of Crisis:

A View from Anthropology's Career Readiness Commission

High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology Meetings

October 7-8, 2022

Agenda

- The Crises
- The Commission
- The “Products”
- The 2nd Year
- The Challenges

CAREER READINESS COMMISSION

The Crises: *Anthropology is struggling*

Reduction in enrollment

- 20% decline in BA degrees between 2011-2021*
- Programs strain to remain relevant in eyes of administrators

Inadequate career preparation

- Professional development
- Practical experiences (e.g., internships, class projects)
- Solutions-mindset orientation
- Exposure to practitioner contributions to theory, methods

Too few anthropologists hired

- Graduates find it difficult to secure jobs in industry, non-profits, and government
- Tenure-track jobs at PhD-granting institutions accommodate only 10% of new PhDs *and* exclude other graduates**

* Analysis of data from the National Center for Education Statistics (Ben Schmidt)

** Analysis of data from Kawa et al. 2018 (Marc Robinson)

CAREER READINESS COMMISSION

The Commission: *Our plan launched May 2021*

Commission Vision:

Preparation of anthropology students for diverse careers

Strategies:

1. Build an understanding of practice today using rapid assessment techniques
2. Engage practitioner, student, and instructor volunteers to create and compile resources
3. Offer training and capacity building to individuals and departments
4. Leverage anthropology associations to engage with and promote the work of the Commission

Anthropology associations are supportive; 350+ volunteers are outstanding!

AAA Task Force on Anthropology in Practice Settings

The Products: *We work to engage people in our bi-monthly meetings and newsletters*

Commission Snapshot

- An identity inclusive of practitioners, students, and instructors
- A community of 350+ that cross-cuts associations, organizations, and subfields
- A website: https://anthrocareerready.net
- World of Work Blog
- Searchable and taggable resource repository (e.g., videos, articles, proposals, job resources)

Commission Products

- Building Careers in Anthropology Conference at Fordham Univ. (May 2022)
- 10 one-page tools
- 16 workshops
- 13 blog posts
- 6 reports
- 9 conference PPT presentations
- 4 class projects
- 1 summer internship project

One-page tools are easy to read and grasp

CAREER READINESS COMMISSION

Can do, can't do, and can't do without!

Consider these characteristics surrounding work

You know yourself best! How do you decide if a job is right for you?

Your Ideal Work Environment

Type of Employment
- Steady with Benefits
  - Full-time hourly
  - Salary
- Intermittent
  - Contract/Project/Seasonal
  - Self-employed

Type of Work
- Managed by a supervisor
- Collaborative/Team-based
- Self-directed

Work Orientation
- Internal-facing (e.g., employees)
- External-facing (Varies by industry and can include)
  - Clients and customers
  - Vendors and suppliers
  - Government constituents
  - Community members and stakeholders
  - Scientific peers

Work Hours
- Fixed Schedule
- Flexible Schedule
- Rotating Schedule
- Evenings/Weekends
- On-call hours
- Paid time off (PTO), Sick days, holidays

Work Location
- Office
- Remote (e.g., from home)
- On the Road (e.g., consulting)
- In the Field (e.g., for a project)
- Hybrid

Workstation
- Private Office Space/Cubicle
- Ambient Noise/Activity
- Immediate Access to Work Materials and Equipment
- Sitting/Standing
- Lighting

Observe and Reflect: An Interview Checklist

Apply your observation skills. Review these questions before and after you attend a job interview to decide if this role and organization are right for you.

- To what extent do your values match the organization's stated values (e.g., on the website)?
  - Is the industry, mission, and/or role aligned with your own personal values?
- To what extent does the organizational culture appear to be a good fit for you?
  - Are you expected to attend after hours events, such as happy hours? Does this match your lifestyle and goals?
- How would you describe your reactions to your future boss? Your colleagues?
  - Did you feel a positive connection or did anything give you pause?
- Did you feel welcomed?
- What did you learn by observing any workplace interactions?
- Did you learn anything new about the job expectations?
  - Does the role still match the written job description?
- Is the configuration of the workspace likely to affect your performance?
- Did you sense that all aspects of you as a person were accepted by those your interacted with in the hiring process?
  - Were your personal boundaries and time respected?
- To what extent will this organization accommodate any special circumstances/needs you face?

CAREER READINESS COMMISSION

7

Write a short piece for the World of Work Blog

- How Can Anthropologists Be the Change We Wish to See in the World?
- What Can Applied Archaeology Offer Anthropology?
- How Does a Conference Help Anthropology Matter?
- “Huh, get a job?” say the B-52s or A View from a Liberal Arts University
- How Can I Apply My Anthropology Experience to Get the Job I Want?
- The Field for Everyone: Deepening Students’ Professional Development
- Why Should Anthropologists Be Active on LinkedIn?
- A Love Letter to Anthropology
- How Can I Increase My Anthropological Impact?
- How Can Students Learn to Talk about the Relevance of Anthropology?
- How Do You Create a Results-oriented Resume?
- How Do I Help My Students Find Work?
- I Saw Reference to “T-shaped Qualifications?” What is this?

Class project examples offer students practical skills and experience

University of North Texas

- Interview study to identify factors tied to successful applied programs
- Fall 2021, Susan Squires with grads

Oregon State University

- Blog posts sharing insights about UG training
- Winter 2022, Bryan Tilt with UGs

Western University, ON

- Cases in which successful approaches have been applied in industry, non-profits, and gov't
- Fall 2022, Andrew Walsh with UGs

University of Delaware

- Podcasts about environmental groups working toward climate change
- Fall 2022, Carla Guerrón Montero with UGs

The 2nd Year: *Where is the Commission headed next?*

- Developing standards for training
- Engaging in capacity-building in anthropology departments
- Developing more materials and methods
- Improving and expanding the website
- Establishing and building out our networks and linkages
- Continued data gathering
- Developing a framework for a community of practice
- Publishing
- Publicity

We seek your help because we value you

- Ask two instructors you know to
  - Explore the **Career-related Materials** with their students https://anthrocareerready.net/resources/career-related-materials/
  - Get these students to send their comments for improvements to elizabeth.briody@gmail.com or rwnolan@purdue.edu
- Take the time to
  - Explore the **Commission Materials:** https://anthrocareerready.net/resources/commission-materials/
  - Send us your suggestions for the Commission's next steps
- Identify one instructor, practitioner, or student who would be willing to write a blog post for our World of Work Blog: https://anthrocareerready.net/updates/world-of-work-blog/