Anthropology in Practice

Oregon State

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Improving the Framing on What Majors Will Learn

My experience in anthropology has been far from what I expected. When I first started applying to college I had never actually heard of it. Anthropology had only become my major because I had always been interested in archaeology. But once I fully dove into the major, I really started to notice a lot of parts that made sense but then some that did not make sense.

When registering and making my schedule I had first thought it all made sense I would be taking all archaeology classes which ended up not being the case. I quickly learned that I had to take all kinds of anthropology classes. When I started to take those classes I noticed that it seemed very all over the place, meaning that a lot of the main topics of the courses ended up not fully connecting. I understand that not everything is supposed to connect to each other, but I feel that after taking all these classes, my knowledge of anthropology is all over the place—which is not a bad thing, but I just feel that I have all this information that I may not get the chance to use since my concentration is archaeology. I feel that when going into an anthropology major, it should be either more informed about what all the different classes can offer or there should also be me guidance when it comes down to your concentration.

One more thing that I wanted to touch on is the career readiness for anthropology. My current anthropology class focuses on preparing students for their future with anthropology. This course ended up being one of the most useful I have ever taken in terms of knowing what to do next. It was here where I was finally able to come up with a plan for my future in archaeology. During my time in this class, it came to my attention that there should be more awareness of future plans or some sort of career readiness. I started to think about: what if someone took this

course, and it was too late? What I mean by that is: what if a senior was taking this class and then realized that they do not have a full path set for themselves, and now they have all this knowledge, but it is too late and they are now graduating? That worries me because they may not have had a chance to do any internships or jobs related to their major and concentration. Because of this I feel that it is important to know this ahead of time and to have a plan set and ready. However, I also feel that there should be more classes earlier on that can help start you on this path and inform you about different internships to allow for someone to be more ready before graduating. Both of these points I have made are two that I had really wished I knew sooner about. Now, I still have some time before I am fully in the anthropology world but I thought it would be important for others to know what I have learned and noticed.