aCRN anthropology
CAREER READINESS NETWORK

NETWORK-WIDE

Virtual Meeting

Newcomers welcome!

aCRN

May 21, 2026
4:00 p.m. Eastern

Welcome!

- To our first time participants
- To our returning members

Agenda

1. Recognition of Riall Nolan
2. Happy 5th Anniversary ACRN
3. Career Ready Dept. Forum
4. Client-based Class Project – Marquette University
5. Call for Class Project in Fall
6. DU Careers and Internships Page
7. The Namla Club
8. Discussion – Experimenting and Rebranding during the Job Search
9. Updates

Recognition of Riall Nolan

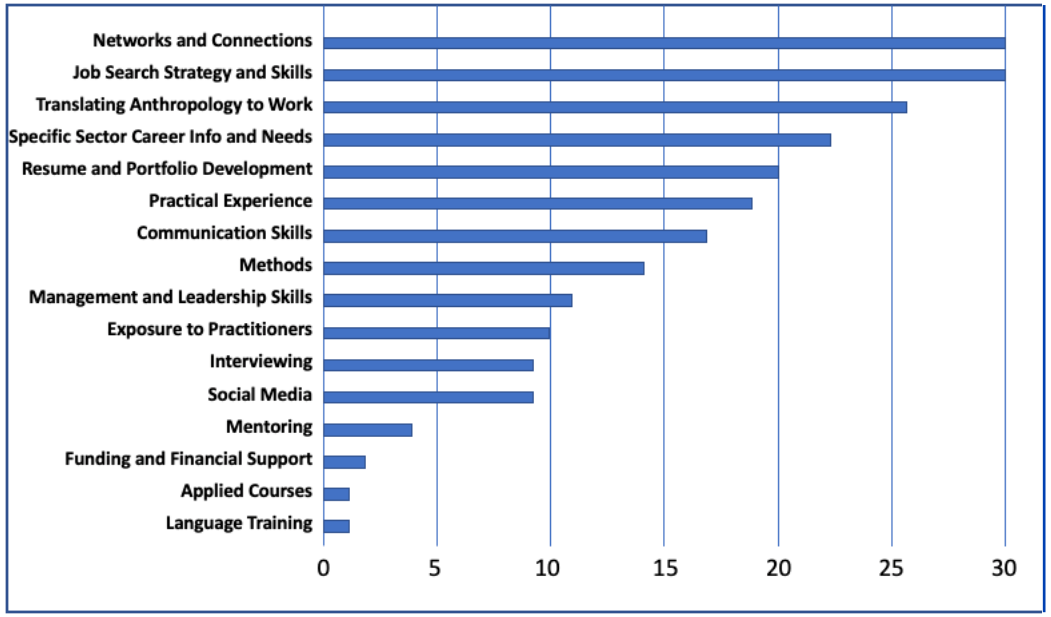
Elizabeth K. Briody

Recognition and appreciation matter, particularly in a voluntary network

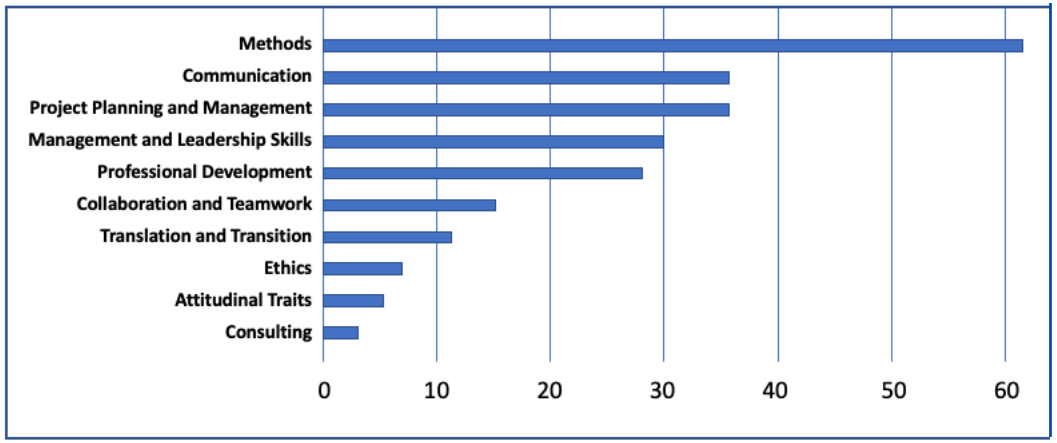
- **Riall Nolan** has served as one of ACRN's Co-Chairs for five years
- He is stepping back from ACRN for the moment
- A May 18 World of Work blogpost acknowledges his many ACRN contributions
  - Innovative, problem-solving research
  - Model of the Career Ready Curriculum
  - Tools for Job Seeker as well as Instructors and Departments

He conducted basic research on practitioners to discover what was missing in their education

Skills and Experience Mentions for **Getting a Job** (n=227)



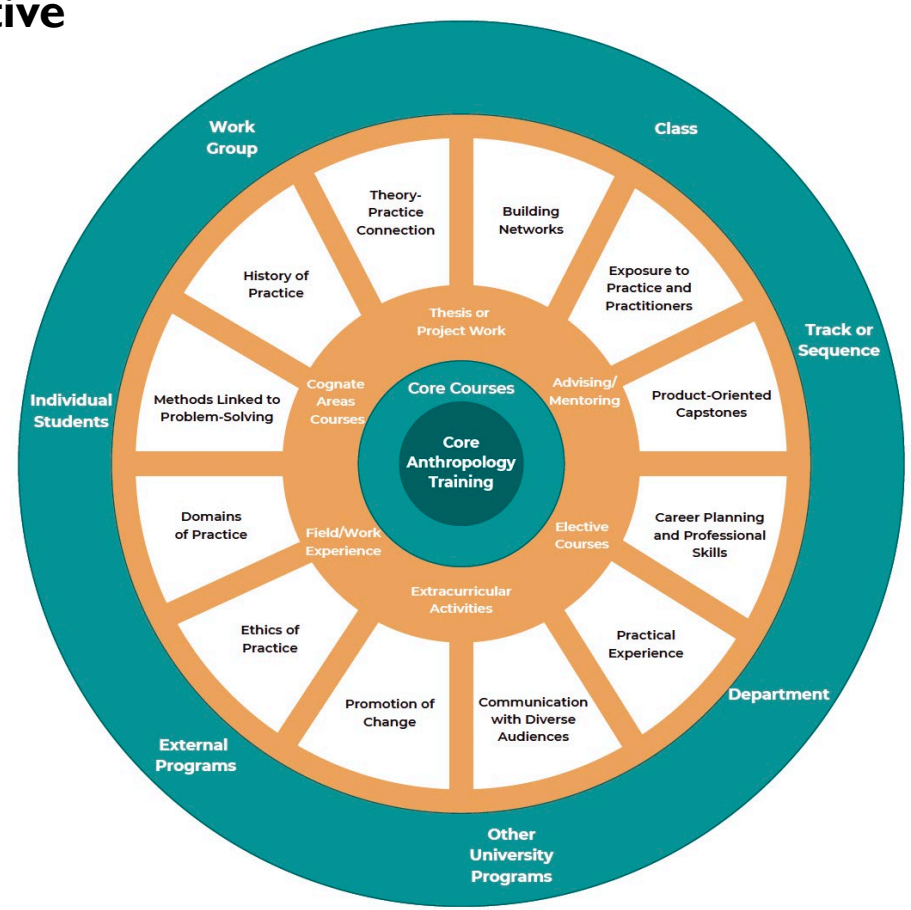
Skills and Experience Mentions for **Doing a Job** (n=237)



His model of the Career Ready Curriculum has served as a framework for two ACRN services

Departmental Advisory Initiative

- Advise Anthropology depts/programs on their customized career readiness implementation plan
- Coach them on its implementation over 12 mo.



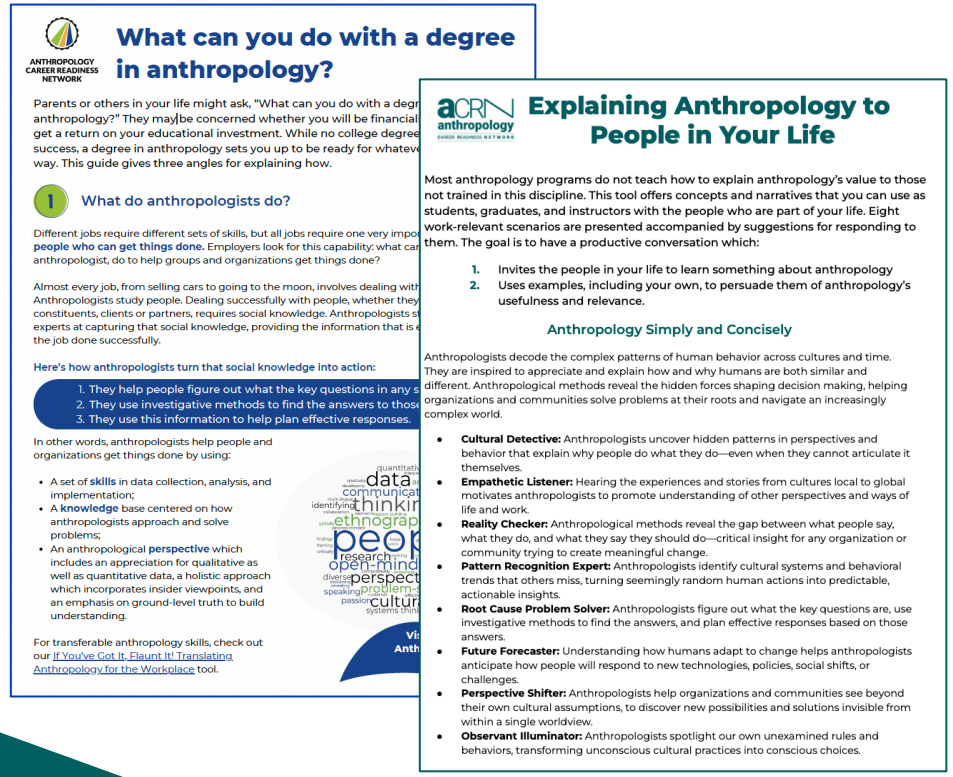
Practice Academy

Off-the-shelf trainings for instructors via workshops

- Provide specific lesson plans for each of the 12 "spokes"
- Include PPT slide deck, related resources
- Position these trainings as "easy to integrate" into existing courses

Riall has also developed several “how-to” tools, some of which appear in ACRN’s two books

For Job Seekers



ANTHROPOLOGY CAREER READINESS NETWORK

What can you do with a degree in anthropology?

Parents or others in your life might ask, “What can you do with a degr
anthropology?” They may be concerned whether you will be financial
get a return on your educational investment. While no college degree
success, a degree in anthropology sets you up to be ready for whatev
way. This guide gives three angles for explaining how.

1 What do anthropologists do?

Different jobs require different sets of skills, but all jobs require one very impo
people who can get things done. Employers look for this capability: what ca
anthropologist, do to help groups and organizations get things done?

Almost every job, from selling cars to going to the moon, involves dealing with
Anthropologists study people. Dealing successfully with people, whether they
constituents, clients or partners, requires social knowledge. Anthropologists s
experts at capturing that social knowledge, providing the information that is
the job done successfully.

Here’s how anthropologists turn that social knowledge into action:

1. They help people figure out what the key questions in any s
2. They use investigative methods to find the answers to those
3. They use this information to help plan effective responses.

In other words, anthropologists help people and organizations get things done by using:

- A set of **skills** in data collection, analysis, and implementation;
- A **knowledge** base centered on how anthropologists approach and solve problems;
- An anthropological **perspective** which includes an appreciation for qualitative as well as quantitative data, a holistic approach which incorporates insider viewpoints, and an emphasis on ground-level truth to build understanding.

For transferable anthropology skills, check out our If You’ve Got It, Flaunt It! Translating Anthropology for the Workplace tool.

Explaining Anthropology to People in Your Life

Most anthropology programs do not teach how to explain anthropology’s value to those not trained in this discipline. This tool offers concepts and narratives that you can use as students, graduates, and instructors with the people who are part of your life. Eight work-relevant scenarios are presented accompanied by suggestions for responding to them. The goal is to have a productive conversation which:

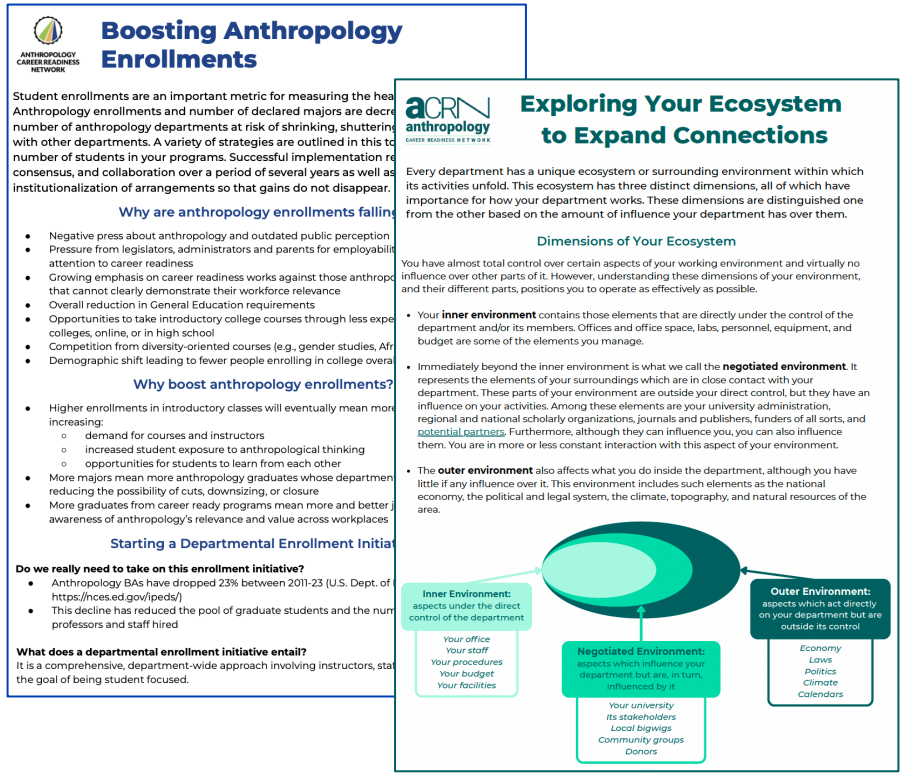
1. Invites the people in your life to learn something about anthropology
2. Uses examples, including your own, to persuade them of anthropology’s usefulness and relevance.

Anthropology Simply and Concisely

Anthropologists decode the complex patterns of human behavior across cultures and time. They are inspired to appreciate and explain how and why humans are both similar and different. Anthropological methods reveal the hidden forces shaping decision making, helping organizations and communities solve problems at their roots and navigate an increasingly complex world.

- **Cultural Detective:** Anthropologists uncover hidden patterns in perspectives and behavior that explain why people do what they do—even when they cannot articulate it themselves.
- **Empathetic Listener:** Hearing the experiences and stories from cultures local to global motivates anthropologists to promote understanding of other perspectives and ways of life and work.
- **Reality Checker:** Anthropological methods reveal the gap between what people say, what they do, and what they say they should do—critical insight for any organization or community trying to create meaningful change.
- **Pattern Recognition Expert:** Anthropologists identify cultural systems and behavioral trends that others miss, turning seemingly random human actions into predictable, actionable insights.
- **Root Cause Problem Solver:** Anthropologists figure out what the key questions are, use investigative methods to find the answers, and plan effective responses based on those answers.
- **Future Forecaster:** Understanding how humans adapt to change helps anthropologists anticipate how people will respond to new technologies, policies, social shifts, or challenges.
- **Perspective Shifter:** Anthropologists help organizations and communities see beyond their own cultural assumptions, to discover new possibilities and solutions invisible from within a single worldview.
- **Observant Illuminator:** Anthropologists spotlight our own unexamined rules and behaviors, transforming unconscious cultural practices into conscious choices.

For Instructors and Departments



ANTHROPOLOGY CAREER READINESS NETWORK

Boosting Anthropology Enrollments

Student enrollments are an important metric for measuring the hea
Anthropology enrollments and number of declared majors are decr
number of anthropology departments at risk of shrinking, shutterin
with other departments. A variety of strategies are outlined in this t
number of students in your programs. Successful implementation r
consensus, and collaboration over a period of several years as well a
institutionalization of arrangements so that gains do not disappear.

Why are anthropology enrollments fallin

- Negative press about anthropology and outdated public perception
- Pressure from legislators, administrators and parents for employabil
  attention to career readiness
- Growing emphasis on career readiness works against those anthropo
  that cannot clearly demonstrate their workforce relevance
- Overall reduction in General Education requirements
- Opportunities to take introductory college courses through less expe
  colleges, online, or in high school
- Competition from diversity-oriented courses (e.g., gender studies, Af
- Demographic shift leading to fewer people enrolling in college overa

Why boost anthropology enrollments?

- Higher enrollments in introductory classes will eventually mean mor
  increasing:
  - demand for courses and instructors
  - increased student exposure to anthropological thinking
  - opportunities for students to learn from each other
- More majors mean more anthropology graduates whose departmen
  reducing the possibility of cuts, downsizing, or closure
- More graduates from career ready programs mean more and better j
  awareness of anthropology’s relevance and value across workplaces

Starting a Departmental Enrollment Initia

Do we really need to take on this enrollment initiative?

- Anthropology BAs have dropped 23% between 2011-23 (U.S. Dept. of
  https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/)
- This decline has reduced the pool of graduate students and the num
  professors and staff hired

What does a departmental enrollment initiative entail?
It is a comprehensive, department-wide approach involving instructors, sta
the goal of being student focused.

Exploring Your Ecosystem to Expand Connections

Every department has a unique ecosystem or surrounding environment within which its activities unfold. This ecosystem has three distinct dimensions, all of which have importance for how your department works. These dimensions are distinguished one from the other based on the amount of influence your department has over them.

Dimensions of Your Ecosystem

You have almost total control over certain aspects of your working environment and virtually no influence over other parts of it. However, understanding these dimensions of your environment, and their different parts, positions you to operate as effectively as possible.

- Your **inner environment** contains those elements that are directly under the control of the department and/or its members. Offices and office space, labs, personnel, equipment, and budget are some of the elements you manage.
- Immediately beyond the inner environment is what we call the **negotiated environment**. It represents the elements of your surroundings which are in close contact with your department. These parts of your environment are outside your direct control, but they have an influence on your activities. Among these elements are your university administration, regional and national scholarly organizations, journals and publishers, funders of all sorts, and potential partners. Furthermore, although they can influence you, you can also influence them. You are in more or less constant interaction with this aspect of your environment.
- The **outer environment** also affects what you do inside the department, although you have little if any influence over it. This environment includes such elements as the national economy, the political and legal system, the climate, topography, and natural resources of the area.

Happy 5th Anniversary ACRN

Jennifer Studebaker

Has it really been five years?

What has ACRN accomplished?

- Conducted and published research projects
- Created a community focused on career readiness
- Helped anthropology students and anthropologists think differently about anthropology's value and relevance

How have we done it?

- Produced 104 how-to tools, two books, seven journal articles or chapters, 95 blogposts, and a 2022 conference
- Advised 18 Anthropology programs through DAI and 17 client-based class projects
- Publicized 48 practitioners through the Speaker's Bureau

We extend our thanks and appreciation to all who have sustained this Network

- Website creator/webmaster: Matt Artz
- Blog editor: Priscilla Rachun Linn
- Social media lead: Suanna Selby Crowley
- Award sponsors SfAA and AAA
- Association partners: SfAA, AAA, NAPA, WAPA, AAN, AP, GAP, NAMLA
- 17 interns: Cody Skahan, Jon Geyer, Zahra Malik, JJ Wu, Marah Martinez, Priyangshi Dhar, Emma Pramuk, Irene Greene, Chloe Aitken, Megan O'Brien-Rene, Tereza Emilova, Nimra Arooj, Christian Castellanos, Bea Jackson, Maryn Ascher, Alivia Archdale, and Audrey Acres
- Countless contributors Reviewers, DAI facilitators, World of Work bloggers, Speaker's Bureau speakers

1,100 members strong!

Career Ready Dept. Forum

Elizabeth K. Briody

Five DAI programs shared their lessons learned

University of Delaware

Texas A&M University

WCU West Chester University

Oregon State University

ECU

CAREER READY DEPARTMENT FORUM Spring 2026

acrn anthropology CAREER READINESS NETWORK

MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026
2:00-3:30 PM EASTERN

ONLINE SESSION

Prework for Participants

1. What have you learned from the experience of implementing career readiness?
2. What has worked particularly well and why?
3. What has been particularly difficult and why?
4. How have you solved some of these implementation problems?
5. How could ACRN improve its interaction with DAI departments?

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Discussion progressed from enrollment/majors to Anthropology's PR problem to risk management

Increase Enrollment/Majors

- Get more ANTH courses listed in Gen Ed requirements
- Send targeted emails (e.g., healthcare, history/archaeology, forensic/criminal justice), to prospective students
- Cultivate external contacts for internships, entry jobs

Address PR Problem

- Change the narrative that ANTH is the worst major
  - Gather employment and salary data from alums; compile anonymized data across discipline
  - Publicize results using this data
- Develop public's understanding of ANTH
  - Write more Op-Eds
  - Publicize more anthropological studies for general audiences

Improve Risk Management

- Prepare for possibility that your Program/Dept. will be targeted
  - Develop alumni network now
  - Connect with local legislative and municipal contacts now
- Become more politically active
  - Engage in civic discourse
  - Get training in effective ways of interacting with state legislators
  - Spend time meeting with state legislators
- Select changes to be made in the near term, mid term, and long term

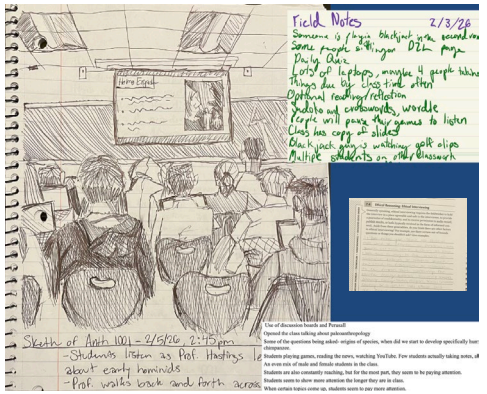
Client-based Class Project

Alex Crampton

Each semester, ACRN coaches two client-based class projects

- **Focus**: How well does the MU Anthropology Program serve the university mission and serve students, especially in preparing students for grad school & in career paths?
- **Professor**: Alexandra Crampton
- **Clients**: Department Chair, Acting Dean of Arts & Sciences
- **Capstone & Research Methods Course**: "The Role of MU Anthropology in Personal Formation and Career Preparation"

Anthropology Program Assessment as an Anthropology field research project



- Course introductions: ethnographies, methods articles
- "Now Your Turn": PO, interviews, surveys, online research
  - Most weeks = team research meetings; develop analytic lens
- Add as needed: university strategic plan, Jesuit Apostolic Preferences, articles assessing Anthropology in higher ed & in job market. And, formal assignments, due dates.
- Focus: Client presentation with real stakes (MU ANTH restructure)
  - Bonus—Invited to speak to a "council" of alumni
- Final exam: Return to "college experience" literature, client standards, meta-review of methods, transfer to another project, recommendations for revision

Call for Class Project for Fall

Jennifer Studebaker

Since 2021, ACRN has participated in 14 client-based class projects

We work with two professors and their students each semester

- This fall, we will work with Tara Deubel (USF) and her grad students in the course "Professional Development in Applied Anthropology"
- Tara will identify a client and a problem facing that client
- Students will gather and analyze pertinent data and present their results and recommendations back to the client at the semester's end

However,

- We are hoping to find *one more professor* willing to work with us
- If you, or someone you know, is teaching either an UG or grad course in the fall, please contact: Elizabeth.Briody@gmail.com

DU Careers and Internships Page

Alejandro Cerón

Overview

DU Careers and Internships Page

https://liberalarts.du.edu/anthropology/careers-internships

Direct result of ACRN-DAI work in September 2025

- Objective 3.1. Webpage on career-readiness added to departmental website
- Built in 3 months approx.
- Department chair lead the process
- Currently adding details, expanding

Some lessons so far

Control over website contents/structure	Good, supportive partners	Organic integration with what we do
• Double-check with IT and leadership • Find already existing examples	• College Media & Marketing • Dean's office • ACRN	• LinkedIn group • Internship opportunities • Work study opportunities

The Namla Club

Rosalie Post

The Namla Club

Where we help each other find jobs and get hired, figure out entrepreneurship and share resources & inspiring examples of public anthropology

We'll also have monthly community meetups, webinars and more!

How it works?

There's a free newsletter with all sorts of news from the world of applied anthropology over at namlaclub.substack.com (subscribe for free to receive it in email every two weeks)

For 6$ a month, access to our Discord server, the heart of the club

aCRN

Join
The Namla Club

Anthropology for the world that is coming

Sign up to The Namla Club using this QR code to get **25% off** your subscription for the first 3 months

NAMLA

Discussion:
Experimenting and Rebranding during the Job Search

Victoria Danner

A little of my background—

Education

- Master of Applied Anthropology
- Project Management Professional (PMP)
- Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Candidate

Employment

- Rainmakers Strategic Solutions (2019-23)
- National Opinion Research Center (NORC) (2023-25)
- CommonHealth ACTION (2026-)

How I Rebranded

- Led with broadly recognized areas of expertise
  - Project Management Professional > Health Policy > "social scientist"
- PMP first with a little bit of anthropology thrown in for spice
  - Demonstrated how my hybrid of project management and anthropological thinking made an impact for previous employers – and could do the same for them
- What's in it for me-ism (WIIFM?)
  - Active listening to employers' problems and offering my experience as a solution
- They don't know they want an anthropologist until they talk to one
  - "Is there a method where we can observe and interview people at the same time?"

Updates

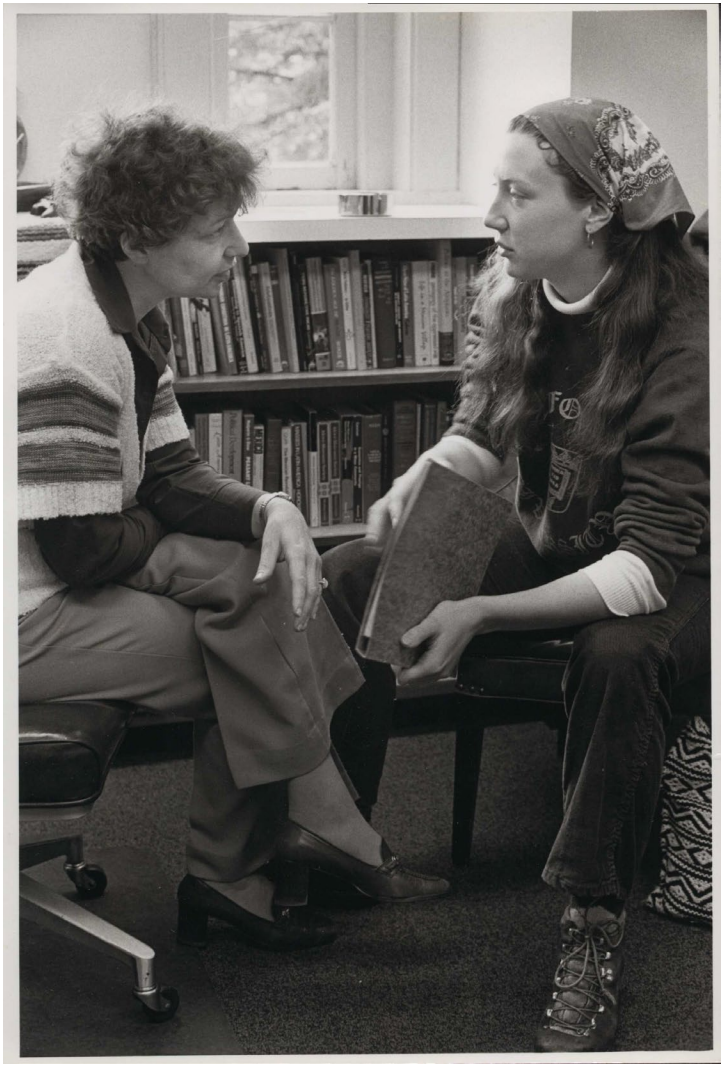
Jennifer Studebaker

Juniors winning the Ina Rosenthal-Urey Mentorship Award & their mentors

- **Alyssa Branam** – Erin Kimmerle and Anne Grauer
- **Anesadora Hightower** – Cheryl Fogle-Hatch and Alec Barker
- **Trinity Slate** – Rebecca Chamberlain-Creanga and Amanda Poole
- **Priyanka Rajapatirana** – Alisha Winn and Christina Kreps
- **Yutong (Einie) Wu** – Missy Maceyko and Kim Kirner

Read more about the Award here

> "… What I was hoping for from this program, and fortunately got, was seeing what cultural anthropologists could do apart from becoming a professor." —Awardee



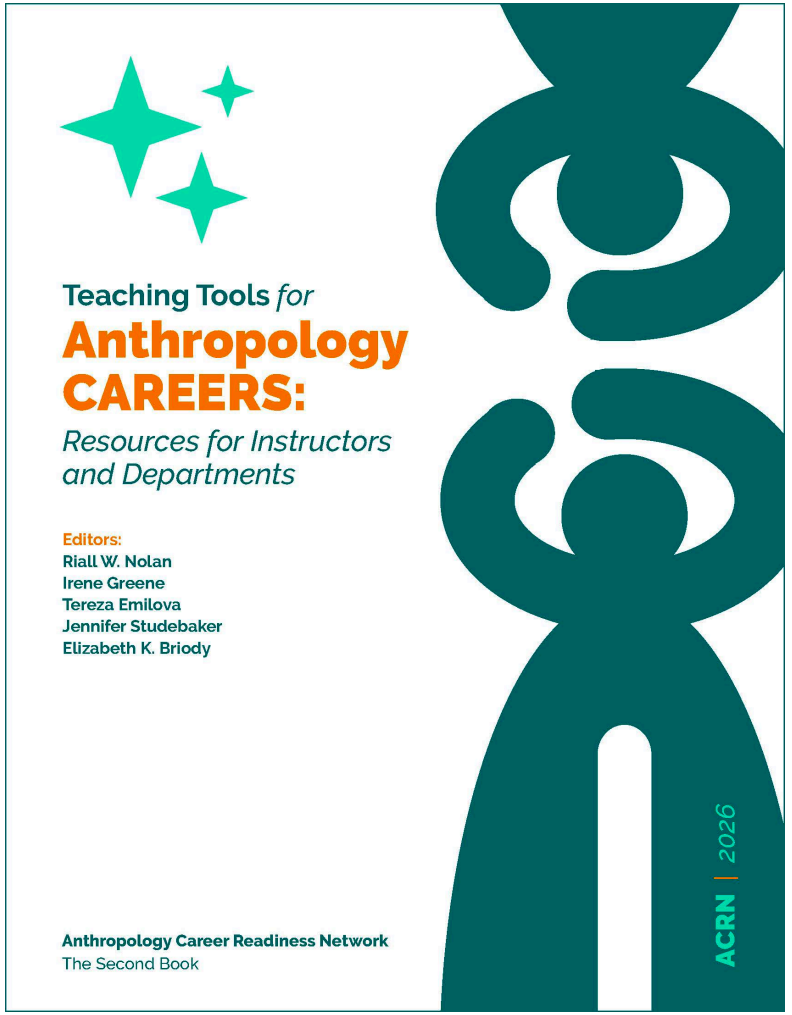
We need to hear from you!

We want your blogposts!

- Writing for the World of Work Blog
  - Provides you with a venue for sharing your thoughts and experiences with anthropologists and others
  - Allows you to contribute to anthropology discussions about career readiness
- Developing your blogpost is straightforward
  - Focus: On careers or career preparation
  - Length: 750-800 words
  - Title: In the form of a question, with your blogpost answering the question
  - Contact: Priscilla Linn – **prlinn3@gmail.com**

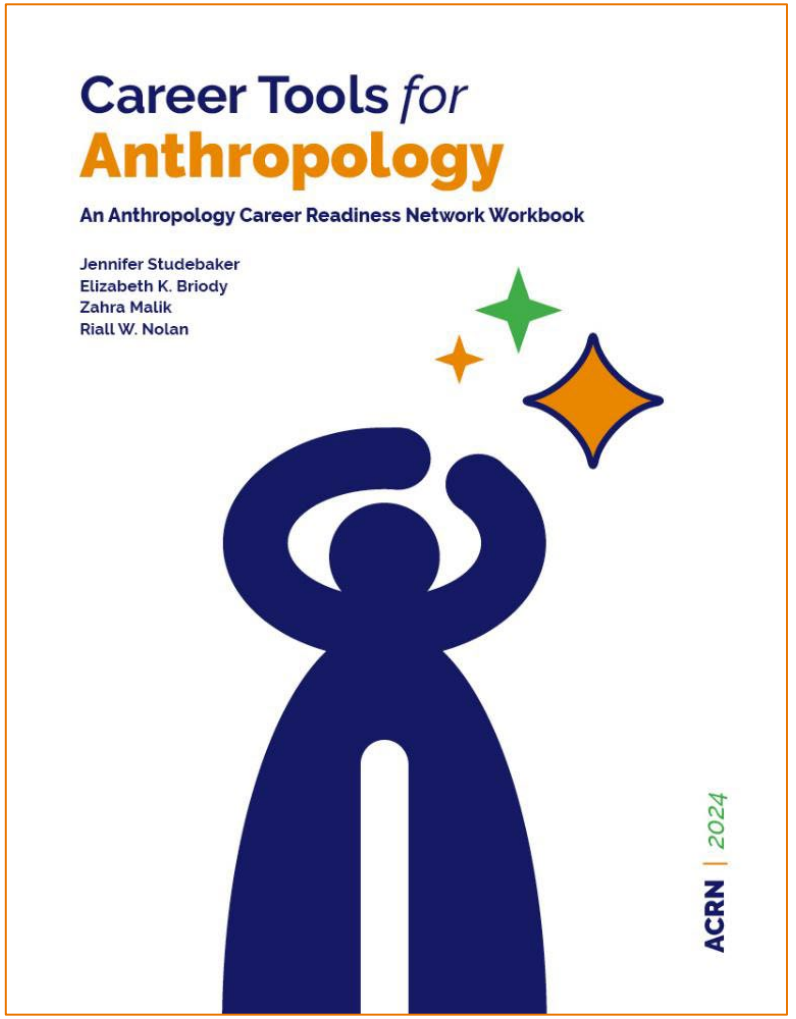
Click to order ACRN's new book

- Consider ordering this book to help with your fall courses:
  - Use the tools to help your students improve their career readiness
  - Work with your colleagues to strengthen your Anthropology Program/Dept.
  - Tell your colleagues about this book and how it offers many resources for them
- Available on amazon or Barnes and Noble for $25



Click to order ACRN's workbook

- If you are teaching this fall:
  - Put this book on your students' reading list
  - Assign some of the exercises as homework or in-class group work
  - Talk to your colleagues about ordering it for their courses
- Available on amazon for $10



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CAREER READINESS NETWORK

Thank you for coming!

Next Zoom Call:

Thursday, July 16, 4:00 pm Eastern