



Appointment of a Special Review Committee for the Discontinuation of the Anthropology BA and MA Degrees

RES 242520

EC

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate requests that the Senate Executive Committee, in consultation with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, appoint a Special Review Committee to conduct a special program review focused on issues related to potential discontinuance of the Anthropology BA and MA Degrees.

RATIONALE: A memorandum requesting consideration for discontinuation of the BA and MA degree in Anthropology has been submitted to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Under the current policy, any tenured or probationary faculty member may object to the letter requesting program discontinuance, however, lecturers do not have the standing to object. An objection to the discontinuance was submitted by a lecturer in the anthropology program. Under the current policy, a majority vote of the Academic Senate would also result in the appointment of a Special Review Committee.

Attachments:

Memorandum - Discontinuation of the Anthropology MA and BA Degrees
Email - Re: Discontinuation of the Anthropology MA and BA Degrees

Distribution List:

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Approved by the Academic Senate:

Academic Senate

California State University, Bakersfield
9001 Stockdale Hwy. • 22 EDUC • Bakersfield, CA 93311



MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 7, 2025

FROM: Luis Vega, Interim Dean, College of Social Sciences & Education
Elizabeth Adams, Interim AVP for Academic Affairs and Dean of Academic Programs

TO: Dr. James Rodriguez, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Hager El Hadidi, Anthropology Program Chair
Dr. Deborah Boschini, AVP of Faculty Affairs
Dr. Melissa Danforth, Chair of the Academic Senate
Dr. Ángel Vázquez-Ramos, UPRC Chair
cc: Ms. Natalie Thompson, Lecturer, Anthropology Department
Mr. Patrick O’Neill, Lecturer, Anthropology Department

SUBJECT: Discontinuation of the Anthropology MA and BA Degrees

The purpose of this memo is to request discontinuation of the MA and BA degrees in Anthropology. This request is not made lightly but rather based on policy related to degree conferrals. The number of degree-conferrals by year are presented in the table below:

Degree Type	Degree Program	Subplan	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	Action Needed	Notes
MA	ANTH	ANTH	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	yes	degree program placed on moratorium Summer 2016
BA	ANTH	ANTH	4	9	4	10	8	7	5	yes	

Conditions supporting discontinuation for both degrees focus on (a) faculty resources, (b) historically low enrollments, and (c) legislative actions’ impacting the Anthropology field: NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990) and CalNAGPRA (California’s version of the law 2021). These laws have negatively affected the teaching of approximately 17 of 54 courses in the major related to the curriculum in archaeology/physical anthropology [<https://catalog.csub.edu/course-descriptions/anth/>].

For the MA in Anthropology, which was put on moratorium in 2016, COVID-19 pandemic conditions in 2021 prevented re-activation of the program, which our policy states must be done in a 5-year window [<https://www.csub.edu/academicprograms/academicplanningmanual/proposals-current-program-revisions.shtml>]. Thus, by policy the MA needs to officially be discontinued so it can be removed from the CSU degree system.

For the BA in Anthropology, the chronic low number of majors (e.g., fall 2024, *N* = 16) and low degree conferrals (Table above) make this degree unsustainable. In addition, a new [CSU directive on low degree conferring programs](#) now requires that campuses discontinue programs that have been identified as such by the Office of the Chancellor (2024/25). Also, of the two remaining tenured professors, one retired at the end of the 2023-2024 academic year. The specialty of this retiring professor is archeology, which further limits teachings in this area.

Thus, with only one tenured faculty, two long time lecturers, and dwindling resources in the CSU system, offering this degree cannot be sustained. The general education course offerings in area D (CalGETC Area 4), can be covered in the College of Social Sciences and Education by other departments. The elimination of GE area E (Self) has freed up resources in both Sociology and Kinesiology which will allow the college to meet the GE demand.

The next step—if discontinuation is approved—is to teach out the current cohort of Anthropology majors. The CSUB policy requires a minimum of three quarters (two semesters) of teach out time to allow for students to finish their degrees if possible. We are recommending that the anthropology course offerings necessary for completion of the remaining students' degrees be offered for four semesters, through the 2026-27 Academic Year. In addition, we recommend the use of CSU Online for students to round out any course offerings we may not be able to offer.

Students who are unable to finish their degrees by Spring 2027 will be offered the opportunity to finish in a different degree at CSUB or to transfer to another CSU. Given the total number of currently active majors (17 including the two students new as of Spring 2025, Ali Berry and Kathleen Sessions).

In addition to the moratorium policy, and the CSU Office of the Chancellor's directive, the following documents are submitted to support discontinuation of both the MA and BA degrees in Anthropology:

1. Anthropology's Program Review, External Reviewer letter, and UPRC's report, are all at the following link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TD73p08Xz3IGMrM9deV28ZSZAYUZ70HY/view>
2. CSUB Degree Discontinuance Policy--link: https://www.csub.edu/academicprograms/files/Policy_on_Discontinuance_of_Academic_Degree_Programs.pdf
3. Discontinuance (6) criteria for the MA Degree (Appendix A) and the BA Degree (Appendix B), are included below.

Appendix A

Please consider this letter to be the initiation of program discontinuation conversations for the MA in Anthropology. Regarding current standing, the MA in Anthropology was put on moratorium status in 2016. This letter is the written request for the review of this academic program for the purpose of determining whether program discontinuance is warranted, in compliance with the University handbook policy on Discontinuance of Academic Degree Programs. This request is being made by the Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Education and the Interim AVP for Academic Affairs and Dean of Academic Programs, after consultation with the Anthropology Program Director, Dr. Hagar El Hadidi who was on sabbatical in fall 2024 but is now back, and debriefing discussions with relevant Anthropology faculty. Since there is no current effort to revive this inactive program, this request fulfills the administrative task of moving it from the moratorium to discontinuation.

Specific reasons for this request include:

1. Moratorium / inactivity: This program has been on moratorium since 2016. No efforts have been made to reconsider this decision.
2. Required discussions completed: The discussions required to place a program on moratorium such as regards quality of program, centrality of program to university, and need occurred in 2016. Since that time, there have been no new and compelling reasons for the university to re-engage in these discussions.
3. Quality of program: Since 2016, the program has been inactive due to its moratorium status. In addition, since that time, key ANTH faculty have exited the program, further diminishing the potential to re-develop this degree offering.
4. Centrality of a program to the University: While the values and benefits of learning Anthropology are high for the well-roundedness of student learning and for the development of critical thinking skills, the university could still fulfill its mission fully and in a more fiscally sustainable manner if this program were discontinued. The goals of critical thinking development currently are being met and in a more fiscally sustainable manner by other offerings at the university.
5. Cost: The cost to begin a program can be high, and given the current climate of budget challenges, investing in re-starting this program is not warranted.
6. Teach out: There have been no students enrolled since the discontinuation in 2016, so no teach out plan is needed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Appendix B

Please consider this letter to be the initiation of program discontinuation conversations for the BA in Anthropology. Regarding current standing, the BA in Anthropology has been in a state of unsustainability due to curriculum effects arising from federal and state (NAGPRA and CalNAGPRA) laws over the last two years, as well as low student enrollments in the major. (The accompanying MA in Anthropology is already on moratorium status.) This letter is the written request for the review of this academic program for the purpose of determining whether program discontinuance is warranted, in compliance with the University handbook policy on Discontinuance of Academic Degree Programs. This request is being made by the Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Education and the Interim AVP for Academic Affairs and Dean of Academic Programs, after consultation with the Anthropology Program Director, Dr. Hagar El Hadidi who was on sabbatical in fall 2024 but is now back, and debriefing discussions with relevant Anthropology faculty.

Specific reasons for this request include:

1. Status as low degree conferring program and CSU directive re. low degree conferring programs: In October, 2023, the CSU Chancellor office issued a [CSU directive on low degree conferring programs](#). This directive applies to all CSU institutions, and it requested universities to review and make decisions on degrees that have been low degree conferring. The BA in Anthropology was determined to be “in need of action” based on very low enrollments and the resulting low number of degrees conferred. The action taken was that low sustainability of the program for future semesters would warrant discontinuation Fall 2025, and it would be marked for campus consideration of discontinuance in Spring 2025.
2. Quality of program: Since 2019, the program and resources have dwindled, making the experience of students sub-optimal and resulting in a diminishment of the overall quality of the program. Faculty retirements and exits have resulted in only one Tenured faculty member remaining in the program. In Fall 2024, 100% of courses were taught by non-T/TT faculty. In addition, these limitations have affected the breadth of offerings and modalities: 100% of offerings in Fall 2024 were online, and only 8 courses were being offered, 63% (5) of which had enrollments of 15 or under.
3. Centrality of a program to the University: While we consider the values and benefits of learning Anthropology to be high for the well-roundedness of student learning and for the development of critical thinking skills, the university could still fulfill its mission fully and in a more fiscally sustainable manner if this program were discontinued. In addition, the goals of critical thinking development could still be met and in a more fiscally sustainable manner if this program’s offerings continued to be offered within the GE listings and/or through possible reappearances of this topic as a concentration in another area.
4. Need and instructional contributions: If this program is discontinued, students could still access some related courses through the GE curriculum. In this way, students could still study some of the topics, if desired.
5. Cost: Given the high cost of instructional faculty running very low-enrolled courses (63% of Fall 2024 offerings had class sizes of 15 students or fewer) and the very low overall number of students in the program, this program is not cost-effective to continue running in its current form. In addition, declining student enrollments in university aged students suggest sustainability of the degree is unlikely to improve.
6. Teach out: If program discontinuance is granted, the program will implement the following Teach Out Plan for any existing students. As of Spring 2025, there remain only (17) students

enrolled in the ANTH major. Given this, the impact of discontinuation of this major and on teaching students out will be minimal. Regardless, the department of ANTH is committed to providing equitable treatment to all remaining students so that students have access to complete the program they chose within a reasonable time.

- Prior to discontinuation, ANTH will communicate with students clearly about the discontinuation plan, its timelines, and its implications if any. Given the small number of majors, this communication will also be personalized after advisor consultation to include a review of final courses needed by each student. The plan will include:
 - i. an announcement immediately upon discontinuation notice of a cut-off date beyond which no new students, including transfer students, will be permitted to enter the program. This will be the hiatus date of Fall 2025.
 - ii. All students currently listed by the Registrar as participants in this program shall receive written notification of the program discontinuance no more than 15 days after the official announcement by the President.
 - iii. Plans and alternatives shall be developed to allow currently enrolled students to complete a degree program. Students currently enrolled in the program should be given the opportunity to provide both written and oral statements regarding the alternatives available. Students will be matched with advisors to assist in option discussions.
 - iv. Normally, an academic program shall continue to serve its current students for at least two semesters (three full quarters) following the official announcement of program discontinuance by the President. As noted above, we're proposing a four semester teach-out through Spring 2027. During this transition period, course offerings will be designed to assist students in the program to complete the program requirements.
 - v. Notice that the program has been discontinued will be sent to all advisors, units, and agencies involved in advising or providing information regarding academic programs on this campus.

Thank you for your consideration.

Melissa Danforth

From: Patrick O'Neill
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 11:00 AM
To: James Rodriguez; Luis Vega; Hager El Hadidi; Deborah Boschini; Melissa Danforth; Angel Vazquez-Ramos; facultyrightschair.ba@calfac.org; CFA Bakersfield; kanthony@calfac.org
Cc: Natalie Thompson; Elizabeth Adams
Subject: Re: Discontinuation of the Anthropology MA and BA Degrees

Dear Provost Rodriguez,

I would like to ask: Why have multiple offices in campus been turning away students and / or giving them ultimatums to change major from anthropology to something else or be denied admission or lose their academic progress because the "anthropology program is on moratorium" or "discontinued" etc?

This has been a concerted activity since last summer for the undergraduate program and has been done to ensure that the program can not recruit student majors and represents implementation of action to close program without following policy and procedures and at the expense of our students and faculty. Misinforming students and faculty violates their rights and goes against our university's mission and the promise of shared governance, support for student success and dedication to faculty advancement. It has also been done in violation of the Collective bargaining agreement, which demands union involvement and proper, timely notifications.

How will the sabotage be undone. There should be investigation to determine who gave the order to implement these activities for a year or more prior to official notice?

The same is true of the MA program which was never officially discontinued or approved for discontinuation by senate or by chancellor's office. Again, it seems process and procedures outlined in CSU policy and CSU Bakersfield policy regarding such actions.

The university has refused to hire faculty for anthropology since 2014, and has made no effort to revive the program nor to provide support, but has made every effort to prevent the success of its students and faculty.

Respectfully,

Patrick O'Neill, M.A.
Lecturer, Anthropology
SSE, CSU Bakersfield
661-432-3370

P. O'Neill, M.A.
Lecturer, Anthropology
SSE, CSU Bakersfield
661-432-3370

From: James Rodriguez <jlrodriguez@csub.edu>

Sent: Friday, February 7, 2025 8:39 PM

To: Luis Vega <lvega@csub.edu>; Hager El Hadidi <hhadidi@csub.edu>; Deborah Boschini <dboschini@csub.edu>; Melissa Danforth <mdanforth@csub.edu>; Angel Vazquez-Ramos <avazquezramos@csub.edu>

Cc: Patrick O'Neill <poneill2@csub.edu>; Natalie Thompson <nthompson8@csub.edu>; Elizabeth Adams <eadams6@csub.edu>

Subject: Re: Discontinuation of the Anthropology MA and BA Degrees

I acknowledge receipt of the message and attached memorandum.

Best regards,

James

JAMES L. RODRIGUEZ, Ph.D.

he/him/his

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and

Professor of Human Development, Child, Adolescent, and Family Studies

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From: Luis Vega <lvega@csub.edu>

Date: Friday, February 7, 2025 at 10:59 AM

To: James Rodriguez <jlrodriguez@csub.edu>, Hager El Hadidi <hhadidi@csub.edu>, Deborah Boschini <dboschini@csub.edu>, Melissa Danforth <mdanforth@csub.edu>, Angel Vazquez-Ramos <avazquezramos@csub.edu>

Cc: Patrick O'Neill <poneill2@csub.edu>, Natalie Thompson <nthompson8@csub.edu>, Elizabeth Adams <eadams6@csub.edu>, Luis Vega <lvega@csub.edu>

Subject: re: Discontinuation of the Anthropology MA and BA Degrees

Dear Provost and Colleagues,

On behalf of Dr. Adams and I, please find that attached memorandum requesting consideration for [degree discontinuation](#) of the BA and MA degrees in Anthropology.

Dr. El Hadidi is the last tenured faculty in the program, and she is now back from her sabbatical, allowing us to officially initiate this request.

We will be happy to provide more information if needed.

Respectfully,

LUIS A VEGA, Ph.D., *he/him*

Interim Dean, College of Social Sciences and Education

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