

2 February, 2010

Harlan Onsrud, Chair  
Program Creation and Reorganization Review Committee  
University of Maine Faculty Senate  
UMaine

Dear PCRRRC,

Herewith, the answers, where possible and applicable, to the questions Harlan raised in his letter dated 1/25/10.

*1. Programs to which potential PhD students might be drawn in competition nationally with the proposed PhD program at the University of Maine include the Anthropology PhD programs at the University of Georgia and the the University of Washington as mentioned in your proposal. How many PhD students have graduated from these programs on average over the past five years? What percentage of the PhD graduates were funded on grants on what percentage funded themselves?*

We briefly discuss two similar programs in our proposal. Neither of these programs offers degrees in Environmental Policy.

The University of Washington has a total student enrollment of 41,405 and offers 3 Ph.D. degrees in Anthropology (Physical, Archaeology, and Sociocultural) with the sociocultural degree having one area of emphasis in environmental anthropology. UWA has 126 total Ph.D. students, 40 of which are in the Sociocultural program with 14 of those interested in environmental anthropology. Approximately 1/3 of the students are supported with departmental/university RAs and TAs, 1/3 are supported through their own or their advisor's grants or fellowships, and 1/3 support themselves. UWA has recently experienced a 30% cut in TA/RA funding. They graduate approximately 8-10 students per year.

The University of Georgia has a total student enrollment of 34,180 and offers a Ph.D. in Ecological and Environmental Anthropology. They have a total of 40 students in the program and graduate approximately 7 per year. The department supports 28 students with TAs/RAs and

others are supported with university assistantships or through grants and fellowships leaving approximately 2-5 students supporting themselves per year.

2. *You mention the kinds of potential employment opportunities in a single sentence on page 3. Can you please be more explicit about any evidence you have that the graduates would be sought after in these sectors? Perhaps you could describe where graduates of other Anthropology PhD programs focused on environmental issues are currently employed.*

The vision for this program is based primarily on projecting current and future needs rather than assessing where we have been in the past. Currently environmental anthropologists are employed in Cultural Resource Management, in private business, in state, national, and international institutions working on environmental management and change, and in university departments of anthropology and environmental sciences. No program we have talked with has specific statistics on where each of their graduates is employed.

Our program will be the first in the nation to train environmental policy experts in the human cultural dimension to fill what we believe is a current and future need for successful environmental policy analysis, implementation, and legislation at the local, national, and global scale. We envision that our graduates will find employment in the traditional jobs mentioned above but that they will be positioned to fill the burgeoning needs of local, national, and international governmental agencies, the United Nations, World Bank, USAID (United States Agency for International Development), USDA (United States Department of Agriculture), as well as in the non-profit and NGO (non-governmental organization) sector. We envision these as the jobs of the future, which makes quantification difficult.

3. *You mention that this will be a small PhD program and you expect to have an average of approximately one PhD recipient per year after the program is up and running after a period of years. The UMS administration is requesting the scrutiny for viability of all those PhD programs that graduate fewer than two PhDs per year. We assume that you placed a conservative number in your proposal to not over promise. Is this true? If true, what would be the number of graduate you would hope to aspire to each year without requiring new faculty resources?*

Ph.D. programs tend to be run in conjunction with successful undergraduate programs as they use the same resources, and undergraduate and graduate training complement and enhance each other. Small Ph.D. programs could easily be run alongside a large

undergraduate program with little to no cost. The limiting factor to the size of the Ph.D. program is resources. Given our current resources (labs, faculty, funding) and our successful undergraduate program, we have realistically projected our Ph.D. program enrollment. If resources were to increase, through increase in grants (which we will seek), faculty, or assistantships, then the number of students we could support and graduate would also increase.

We are proposing a small, quality-based, niche program that individually tailors anthropology and environmental policy courses, research, and internships to individual students, their backgrounds, and their expected outcomes. We are not proposing a large graduate program. Our estimate is realistic given current resources, but if our grants are successful student numbers will be greater.

4. *In most disciplines students pass through a master's degree program before proceeding to the PhD degree. To what extent are Anthropology professors advising currently Master's degree candidates at the University of Maine? Because Anthropology does not have its own master's degree program, from which master's degree programs at the University of Maine would you hope to attract students for this PhD program?*

Attaining a master's degree on the way to a Ph.D. is no longer the norm in many disciplines, including anthropology and especially cultural anthropology. In fact, many programs are phasing out the master's degree or are making it a terminal degree rather than a natural progression to the Ph.D.

Most of the faculty in anthropology are jointly appointed in or are affiliated with other units across campus, and we advise graduate students in the IPh.D. program, the Climate Change Institute, the School of Marine Sciences, the Ecology and Environmental Sciences Program, and the M.A. in Liberal Studies Program. Currently anthropology faculty are supervising or advising sixteen graduate students. Of the ten faculty in anthropology, only one has not advised graduate students in other programs.

We envision attracting students from undergraduate and master's degree programs. The master's degree programs on campus from which we hope to attract students are the M.S. in Climate Change, the M.S. in Marine Policy, the M.A. in Global Policy in the School of Policy and International Affairs, the M.S. in Forest Resources, the M.S. in Ecology and Environmental Science, the M.S. in Wildlife Ecology, the M.S. in

Resource Economics and Policy, and the M.S. in Food Science and Human Nutrition.

5. *You are proposing several new courses to be offered within the proposed PhD program. Graduate courses require a minimum of five enrolled students in order to be offered. If you expect under five PhD students to enter your program per year and you have no other graduate students, please explain how you expect to be able to consistently meet minimum course enrollment numbers*

As explained above, we do have other graduate students in other programs. The new courses offered in conjunction with our Ph.D. program would be taken by our new students in the Ph.D. program and by interested students in other programs across campus as well, such as the programs listed in 4. above. Given graduate student interest in our research and the interest our proposed program has generated across campus, we do not foresee problems in meeting a minimum course enrollment. However, if a course enrolls too few students, we could offer it as an independent study.

Given UMaine's focus on environmental sciences and on policy, the courses we intend to offer will greatly complement current campus offerings in our areas of strength and will not only feed off the current student population but greatly add to the campus' research and educational contributions as well.

6. *Because of split appointments with other academic programs for most of the anthropology faculty it is difficult to assess faculty teaching and advising burdens. How many full-time equivalent positions are in the department? How many undergraduate majors in anthropology have graduated each year over the past five years? Do you contemplate any difficulty in sustaining continued course support for these students and for any campus-wide service courses you may offer while increasing the graduate student body of PhD students?*

Anthropology has 10 full time faculty with an FTE of 5.80. Over the last 5 years we have graduated an average of 17-23 majors per year, but our number of majors continues to grow. We do not contemplate any difficulty in sustaining our current undergraduate program with the added small-scale niche Ph.D. program we propose. We offer a number of large-scale popular general education courses, and we have recently modified our entire curriculum to better serve our majors and increase our enrollments in a sustainable way, the results of which have been immediate and satisfying (i.e. we teach a very high number of SCH's per FTE). The numbers we provide in our proposal are accurate and can be sustained without further resources. If further

resources can be obtained, either internally or externally, our numbers could grow, but we are not requesting or expecting internal resources to operate the Ph.D. program as proposed.

7. *What is the minimum number of course credits that a student entering the PhD degree from an undergraduate program must take to complete the PhD degree (not including thesis credits)? What is the minimum number of course credits that a student entering the PhD degree from a master's degree program must take to complete the PhD degree (not including thesis credits)?*

The curriculum is independently tailored to each student depending on their background coming into the program, environmental focus area, and whether they are interested in national or international environmental policy issues. Every student, however, will need to take the Core Curriculum of Cross-Cultural Human Dimension courses consisting of seven courses equal to 21 student credit hours. Therefore, *the minimum number of course credits that a student entering the Ph.D. degree from an undergraduate program must take to complete the Ph.D. degree (not including thesis credits) is 21, and the minimum number of course credits that a student entering the Ph.D. degree from a master's degree program must take to complete the Ph.D. degree (not including thesis credits) is 21.*

8. *Are there any prerequisites that will need to be fulfilled prior to taking any of the newly proposed graduate courses? Will any of the new graduate courses listed be offered using distance technologies?*

The program will admit students who have an anthropological/social science or an environmental science education. Depending on the particular student's previous training, they may need to take undergraduate background courses in other areas they have not previously covered. That will be assessed on an individual basis as the curriculum is independently tailored to each student depending on their background coming into the program, environmental focus area, and whether they are interested in national or international environmental policy issues.

None of the graduate courses listed will be offered using distance technologies.

Additionally, members of the Faculty Senate's PCRR requested a few examples of cutting-edge research that could be conducted in an Anthropology and Environmental Policy Ph.D. program. We briefly summarize three here.

- 1) Anthropologists and institutional economists have expended considerable effort in trying to understand why some human institutions succeed and some fail. Some years back, this research was applied in redesigning regulations governing the Maine lobster industry. Partly in consequence, the lobster industry now consistently reports record harvests. It would be useful to apply these findings to Maine's ground-fishing industry, which is currently in free fall.
- 2) Satellite imagery shows that many private forest owners in Maine – individual and corporate – over-exploit areas of woodland that they own. This is contrary to the expectation of common-property theory, and it would be advantageous to know why.
- 3) The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) reports have attempted to model human behavior in the face of climate change. These models have two deficiencies. They assume nation-states are single social entities when, in fact, colonial and post-colonial states are collections of several sociopolitical entities (as reflected in the rise of 'failed states'). They also model human responses to climate change as primarily economic responses. In actuality, social, political, and ideological considerations may affect human responses as much as economic concerns. Collection and analysis of cross-cultural data on perceptions and practices related to weather and climate could help remedy these deficiencies.

Sincerely,

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