Field site description

Anthropologists were employed in many job venues, but one common employment location was the college system. Many anthropologists taught at universities, others were found at community colleges. According to Doe\(^1\) (2022),\(^2\) in the state of Washington, in fact, approximately 50% of juniors and seniors transferred from one of the community colleges to the universities.\(^3\) One of these community colleges, Everett Community College (EvCC), was located in the city of Everett, Washington, a city once economically connected to paper mills. Now the largest employer was Boeing, an aerospace company which employed over 30,000 workers from the area (City of Everett, Washington, 2022). This skilled workforce was supported by the educational efforts of faculty and staff of EvCC.

About 20,000 students who attended either part-time or full-time; as explained by Doe\(^2\), in the language of the education system about 9,500 FTEs (Full Time Equivalents) were counted for the purposes of accounting to the State. These students attended this community college to receive either technical or academic degrees, to refresh skills, or for personal enjoyment. To meet the demand classes were offered both during the day and in the evenings and, for the last 10 years, more and more classes were provided online (Doe, 2022).

Among the faculty of EvCC was Amy Nthropologist\(^4\), an instructor in anthropology and

---

\(^1\) **Instructor Note:** Do not use pseudonym when citing a public figure in their job setting.

\(^2\) **Instructor Note:** This is an example of how you cite an archived interview, which is recoverable. Do not confuse this with how to handle the personal communications retrieved from your field notes.

\(^3\) **Instructor Note:** The author and year MUST be typed next to each other in APA, so note how this is done for personal communications (even if it seems a bit awkward at times).

\(^4\) Pseudonym
global studies. While these academic disciplines were designated as social sciences, in actuality they would more appropriately be labeled as interdisciplinary (A. Nthropologist, personal communication, October 1, 2022). Because EvCC placed them under the umbrella of social sciences, both Amy’s classroom and her office were situated in one of the newest buildings on campus, Gray Wolf Hall (GWH). An 80,000-square foot building, GWH was built to provide a central location for the social sciences and humanities programs. The building was rather drab and institutional in its appearance, with most of the walls painted white or bare concrete, the corridors polished concrete with a lack of decoration. On one side of each classroom corridor were bulletin boards, populated with colored flyers and notices, providing some release from the stark feel of this edifice. These notices were posted in an attempt to communicate with students. Announcements concerning future classes comingle with promotions for upcoming campus events such as plays, presentations, and celebrations. On the second floor a T.V. updates with similar information, scrolling several times each minute to a new informational display.

The faculty corridor was similar in its layout, but there were some differences. Each office door was cut out and ornamental glass was inserted. While one could not see inside the offices this detail did make for a more personable feel. Each door was constructed the same as all others, although the individuality of faculty was often expressed outside the office doors, where jokes, flyers and other paper detritus were on display. For students the most important notice was a small, yellow note that informed them of faculty office hours. According to Doe (2022), it was common to note a student hovering in front of these notices, trying to decipher when to return to make a successful connection with their faculty. The only other personal contact between most students and their faculty was during classes, campus events, and club meetings (A.

---

5 Instructor Note: Personal communications are paraphrases and quotes that are usually taken from your field notes and so are not recoverable. You cite in-text but NEVER cite in the References.

6 Instructor Note: The use of 1st names is a cultural norm at this field site.
As part of her academic duties, Nthropologist was required to teach a minimum of three classes. As she explained to me, “…teaching anthropology at a community college means you need to be a four-fielder, someone who can teach linguistics, archaeology, biological anthropology and cultural anthropology” (A. Nthropologist personal communication, October 15, 2022). In addition, A. Nthropologist (personal communication, October 15, 2022) liked a variety of coursework, Amy also taught global studies and seemed pleased by this range of courses in that she smiled as she explained that teaching anthropology was never boring.

As a part of the EvCC campus move to the new social sciences and humanities building, she began teaching her classes in Gray Wolf Hall recently. Specifically, her classroom was designed to allow for the teaching of the myriad of classes offered in anthropology and global studies. For instance, this was the only classroom in the building without carpeting and with a number of countertops positioned around the perimeter of the classroom. She explained that these were accommodations for her lab-based, biological anthropology class (A. Nthropologist, personal communication, October 16, 2022). The room was filled with chairs on coasters, making it easy to roll around the room, and with tables that accommodate two students. At the front was a larger student table, with an upholstered chair. This space was reserved for students with physical needs, such as wheel chair seating, but if not used in a particular class snagging this cushioned chair was considered a coup by many students (A. Nthropologist, personal communication, October 17, 2022). Facing south was a long bank of windows, each had a window shade, but the light still shone in strongly. As the temperature was controlled at some central location, the summer months were not hot in the classroom, but movies were often hard to see clearly. A. Nthropologist (personal communication, October 16, 2022) complained of this,
but had no choice but to patiently wait for replacement shades that were to be installed “soon”.

To facilitate showing movies there was an area in each room, which the faculty called a ‘teaching station’ at the front of the room, on the right side (from the student view). This station included a computer, an overhead projector, a monitor and both DVD and VHS players. As there was an Internet connection, web-based resources were readily available to all faculty members.

Unlike earlier generations, where teachers wrote on a blackboard with chalk, EvCC faculty wrote on what was called a white board with a set of erasable markers. A. Anthropologist (personal communication, October 21, 2022) stated she rarely wrote lecture notes on this board, given that her handwriting was hard to read. Instead, A. Anthropologist (personal communication, October 21, 2022) stated she had created web-based lecture notes, which she provided all her students. She strongly encouraged all her students to print a copy of these notes to bring to class.

One of the reasons A. Anthropologist (personal communication, October 21, 2022) liked to teach at a community college was the age range exhibited by her students. She explained that she had done some adjunct (part-time) teaching of university courses and had been a graduate teaching assistant while in school. In those classes everyone was the same age, with similar life experiences. Doe (2022) explained many faculty greatly enjoyed seeing a Running Start student sitting next to a 40+ year-old woman returning to college, a 30 year-old veteran and a 20-something chatting before class. Age was not the only factor that distinguished her community college classroom. Because community colleges served persons of many ethnic origins, more than do universities, A. Anthropologist (personal communication, October 22, 2022) found teaching at EvCC an enriching place to work. Also, as a first generation college student herself, she gained much satisfaction from helping others attend college and be successful.

Most of the students taking anthropology and global studies courses were doing so to
complete the distribution requirements of a degree. For some this was not the case. As can be seen in Figure 1, for the academic year 2022-2014, more than 50% (7/13) of these students anticipated going into cultural anthropology, the most popular subfield of anthropology. Only one student planned on a career in linguistic anthropology. A. Nthropologist (personal communication, October 19, 2022) was not surprised to have only one linguistics student, and in fact, was very pleased for this one student. She indicated that the number of students going into linguistic anthropology has been, and continues to be, limited. [CG1]

According to A. Nthropologist (personal communication, October 21, 2022), the subfield in which one trains was not always a reflection of the type of anthropological research that becomes a professional’s focus. For instance, even though Nthropologist was trained as a biological anthropologist, her PhD fieldwork experience was very similar to that of many cultural anthropologists who work in non-industrialized societies (A. Nthropologist, personal communication, October 21, 2022). One example of this “cross-pollination” of subfields was revealed by a statement she made, “Anthropology is all about participant-observation” (A. Nthropologist, personal communication, October 9, 2022). Given that participant-observation was considered the hallmark of cultural anthropological research, the lines between these subfields seem to be blurred. In fact, A. Nthropologist (personal communication, October 21, 2022) was clear that the holistic approach makes separation of the

---

7 Instructor Note: Note that with a chart or graph, the caption is created at the top.
8 Instructor Note: Note that width of the chart is no wider than ½ width of the text.
A. Anthropologist (personal communication, October 21, 2022) participated in her own fieldwork, spending 15 months in the Solomon Islands. The focus of her research was medical practices and beliefs of the Moli people. She made sure to point out that as a student trained in biological anthropology she still conducted the type of research usually delegated to cultural anthropology. For Amy, this was an important example of the holistic nature of her discipline. In fact, this concept of holism was stated by her during her first meeting with this novice anthropologist. This emphasis on the holistic approach represents a core value for this anthropologist. Another value statement which A. Anthropologist (personal communication, October 21, 2022) expressed was that of cultural relativism. She illustrated this through many examples gleaned from her fieldwork. Among these was a description of what it was like to live without running water, a car, or a telephone or other form of telecommunication. During her time in the Solomon Islands, A. Anthropologist (personal communication, October 21, 2022) lived in a ‘custom house’. Nearly all the materials used to construct the house were garnished from local materials. Nails and hinges for the doors were purchased, at the prompting of the local Makarukan villagers, as they were concerned that their guest (and her possessions) be safe (A. Anthropologist, personal communication, October 21, 2022). In spite of her preparation for the field, she experienced culture shock the first morning she work up in her new home and began brushing her teeth. She had completely forgotten that she was without a sink! She cited this as only one of many experiences that caused her discomfort during her adjustment to her (A. Anthropologist, personal communication, October 21, 2022). Isolation from one’s own culture was taxing, but especially if it was experienced alone.

Geertz (2002) talked to the isolation of many anthropologists who undertake traditional research. He stated that anthropology was attractive to lone wolves. Besides the isolation, and the
culture shock, there were other challenges that Amy faced. She outlined her sense of homesickness, her encounters with malaria, and her bouts of food poisoning as examples of the reasons she struggled, at times, during her fieldwork (A. Anthropologist, personal communication, October 21, 2022).

In spite of A. Anthropologist’s (personal communication, October, 13, 2022) description of the challenges of fieldwork, this novice anthropologist noted that she showed a continuing interest in this part of the world Even as only one of the two field sites were available to this novice anthropologist (EvCC campus), through her stories of field research many insights into the roles of anthropologists were made available.

Anthropologists work in two worlds, one world where they learn from indigenous people (A. Anthropologist, personal communication, October 21, 2022) and the other world where they pass what they learn onto others. Drawing both from their training and from their experiences they were guided by the concept of cultural relativism, often struggling to overcome their own biases in pursue of a greater understanding of human nature.\textsuperscript{10}
References


Anthropology Service Learning Collection, Everett Community College Library, Everett.

WA.


Additional Instructor Notes:

1. Be sure to include an entry for your personal interview. This source, as identified by APA, is called archived materials.
2. Do NOT cite personal communications on the References page. They are based on emails, field notes and such and so the reader could never access them in the original.
3. The author of the interview is NOT you, but the person you interviewed.
4. The author of personal communication is NOT you (unless you actually spoke).