Dear Members of the CSUEB Anthropology Community:

Here’s the latest from the department of anthropology:

First, Congratulations to the Graduates!
This year nineteen CSUEB students plan to graduate in the Spring or Summer (or have graduated in the Fall or Winter quarters) with BA or MA degrees in anthropology. Two anthropology majors also graduated with honors this year: Diamond Castro, and June Martin. Congratulations to them, and to all graduating anthropologists!

Masters Student Theses
The Second Annual Anthropology Emeritus Professors Student Research Paper Prizes Awarded

I’m very pleased to announce the winners of the second Anthropology Emeritus Professors Student Research Paper Prize. We received 9 papers in this year’s competition: 3 from undergraduate students and 6 from graduate students. The judging committee consisted of three students and three professors: Crystal Cheek, Kathy Fox, Darla Tuning, Peter Claus, Laurie Price, and myself. There were a number of excellent papers, and in fact the judging committee decided to award an “honorable mention” to one graduate-student paper in recognition of its high quality (despite the fact that it did not receive the top honor).

In the undergraduate category, the winner is Erica Bretall, a Theater Major. Her paper was entitled, “I came here to study and ended up reading all this!: A study of graffiti on the study desks at the CSUEB library.” Erica used a folklore approach to interpret the graffiti on the library study desks.

In the graduate category, the winner is Antti Vikstedt, a Masters student in the applied anthropology track. His paper was, “The Body Silent – Using Medical & Social Model to Analyze Physically Integrated Dance.” The paper looked at a Bay Area dance troupe that includes both disabled dancers and “non-disabled” dancers, and Antti interrogates the vocabulary and perspective of physical disability.

The winners will each receive $200 and a certificate honoring their achievement. The judging committee also awarded Mercedes Hardey with an “honorable mention” for her paper, “The Preparatoria Mexicana of Tijuana: Alternative Education in a Busy World.” Although it did not win the prize, all readers agreed it was a very fine piece of anthropology.

Congratulations to the winners, and thank you to all of the students who submitted papers and to those who served as evaluators. If you are a student and are returning next year, please consider submitting a paper to next year’s contest. You may edit and improve any paper you have completed for an anthropology course. Official guidelines are available in the office.

And, once again, the department thanks the two Emeritus faculty members who established the prize, contributing to the fund that makes this possible. Dr. Lindy Li Mark established the prize, and Dr. Harry Nimmo generously matched Dr. Mark’s initial contribution. Dr. Mark has since added to the prize fund. We hope to raise additional funds so that we can keep offering this prize for many years to come.

New Faculty in Applied Linguistic Anthropology to Join Us in 2008

The department is very pleased that we concluded a successful search for an assistant professor of applied linguistic anthropology this year. As of “press date” our top candidate has accepted the university’s offer and plans to join us in the fall of 2008. Between now and then he will be on leave working in an applied, business setting, putting his academic training to practical use. (This should lead to the potential for fruitful business anthropology connections once he joins us!) Until all the i’s are dotted and t’s are crossed, we won’t reveal the name of our new faculty member, but I can assure readers that we will be adding to our department an intellectually-lively, energetic, and broadly-trained individual with valuable expertise in linguistic anthropology, business, and East Asian culture.

Dr. Glynn Custred is Retiring After Thirty-Six Years!

Dr. Glynn Custred, who has been teaching at CSUEB since 1971, has reached the end of his five-year term in the Faculty Early Retirement Program and will be stepping down from active service in the department at the end of the current quarter, spring 2007. In his thirty-six years at Hayward, Dr. Custred has served as the advisor to countless master’s students, and has helped many, many undergraduates and graduate students understand the
importance of such things as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, language change and language death, and the difference between pidgin and creole languages. He has been key in establishing and maintaining the department’s offerings in folklore and in folk religion and magic as well. Students nearly universally appreciate his enthusiasm as a professor. Outside of the department he has been active in public policy debates on immigration, and he continues to be active in this area. Although we are glad that our new hire will help keep linguistics a strong part of our program, there is no way we could possibly replace Dr. Custred. I’m sure all of you join me in wishing him a very happy retirement.

Student Activities and Plans
A few students responded to my request for information about their plans for the summer and beyond. Jeannette Boggess has a 540 hour internship at Modoc National Forest this summer, focused on recording historic emigrant trails. Crystal Cheek has been hired for the summer to be part of a CRM firm’s crew doing a long-term, statewide survey and excavation project in historic mining camp sites in Wyoming. Donna Dinardo just returned from a dig on the island of St. Eustatius, Netherlands Antilles, in the Caribbean. She helped to excavate at the second oldest Synagogue in the New World, Honen Dalim, built in 1738-39. This summer she’s deciding where to go on her next dig. After completing the applied anthropology MA degree this year, Dannon Farrald is starting in the PhD program in Anthropology at the University of Nevada in Reno. In addition to taking summer quarter classes, Ephraim Johnson is releasing a new Hip Hop album this summer entitled, “Man of a Thousand Hats,” and is getting his racing license at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma. June Martin is starting the MA in counseling program with an MFT option, concentrating on children and adolescents, at CSUEB. Sarah Swanson will be working as a field crew leader in Public Education at the Presidio Excavation in San Francisco for Cabrillo College. Bruce Shiguera is working “behind the scenes” at the San Francisco Airport Museum on exhibits such as one on Hmong textiles and another on industrial design. And Brent Wilcox is working for WSA, a CRM firm (sometimes under the project management of Eric Strother, an MA graduate of CSUEB). His projects have been prehistoric, Native American sites in both the Bay Area and at a site near Tucson, AZ. The Tucson site may include artifacts as old as 5,000 years.

Faculty Summer Plans
This summer the department’s faculty are planning to engage in a variety of research activities. Henry Gilbert and his team of researchers are heading back to the Afar region in Ethiopia to continue work on the Kesem-Kebena “Emergency Impact Zone.” (This is an area scheduled to be flooded by the construction of a reservoir. See details in the department’s Spring 2007 newsletter, available at http://class.csueastbay.edu/anthropology/Department_Information.php.) He will later be joined by Alan Almquist in this important reconnaissance work. Peter Claus will return to India both to introduce some of his grandchildren to the fieldsite that has occupied him for three decades, but also to help develop an international, on-line educational program that integrates instruction with access to post-colonial archival materials. Glynn Custred is presenting his work on immigration issues at several conferences, and will also spend several weeks with family in Germany. Laurie Price has been working on solar power policy and culture; in addition to a presentation to the Hayward City Council, she is preparing a special edition of "Practicing Anthropology" on alternative energy. Laura Nelson is working on a long-term follow up of participants in a microenterprise training program in the Bay Area, and is also heading back to Seoul, South Korea to conduct research on credit card policies and on demographic changes. George Miller is completing his sabbatical, working on producing a DVD of the Virtual Machu Picchu exhibit.

Outlook for 2007-2008
The department faculty will start the fall off with a planning retreat to look at our programs and activities and envision the course our department will chart for the next five years. I’ll also hold a few sessions with students to elicit student feedback about how we can better
meet student needs, and also to find out what students appreciate most about the department. We are laying the groundwork for a series of brown-bag talks by our faculty, students, and alumni so that we can learn from one another’s anthropological work and research experiences. And in the summer I’ll be sending out a survey about the department and about how anthropology fits into life after graduation to current students and alumni for whom I have email addresses. If you want to be on the list and don’t think I have your email address, please send it to me!

So, once again, I want to wish all you anthropologists a happy summer break. I look forward to seeing returning students in the fall, and if you’re graduating – Please keep in touch!

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