

FACULTY MEETING
April 27, 2012

MOTION

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work moves that Skidmore College create three separate departments: the Department of Anthropology, the Department of Social Work, and the Department of Sociology.

Rationale

Currently, the three programs in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work offer distinct, self-contained majors and minors with separate curricula and no overlapping courses or requirements. In addition, Social Work is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and must follow a strict set of educational policies and accreditation standards that have reinforced its stand-alone presence. Thus, for curricular purposes the programs already operate as distinct entities.

In many ways the three programs function as independent administrative entities as well. They long have held separate meetings to make decisions regarding curricular changes, self-studies, course scheduling, contingent faculty searches, and more. Following the *Faculty Handbook*, SASW as a whole has coordinated activities like tenure-track personnel processes; however, each program now has the tenure-line faculty necessary to staff searches, mentor new colleagues, and manage its own personnel. All but three of Skidmore's twenty-one peer and aspirant colleges have freestanding Anthropology and Sociology departments, and none of them combine three disciplines. (None of these institutions have an accredited Social Work program.).

Resource Implications

We foresee no need for additional resources as a result of the creation of the new departments, and all costs will be one-time only, including modifications to the College Catalog and directory, public relations materials, departmental categories for committee service, handbooks, and the like to reflect the establishment of the new departments.

Anthropology has five tenure-track lines (four of which are currently filled by tenure-line faculty), Social Work has three lines (two of which are held by tenure-line faculty; the third was converted to a permanent non-tenure track line), and Sociology has seven tenure-track lines (with six tenure-line faculty on campus, one of whom is serving as a dean).

Currently, the SASW chair receives two course releases, and the director of the Social Work Program receives 25 percent release time (per Council on Social Work Education accreditation requirements). In our proposed reorganization, the chairs of the Anthropology and Sociology departments will each receive one course release, and the

chair of Social Work will continue to receive a 25 percent release, so there will be no change in the total number of administrative releases.

The programs share departmental office space, located on the second and third floors of the Tisch Learning Center. Supporting the Anthropology curriculum, an archaeology teaching laboratory is located on the first floor of Tisch. There are no shared laboratory, teaching, or faculty office spaces that will need to be allocated after creating separate departments. The Sociology chair will occupy the current chair's office in Tisch 216, and the departments will negotiate future space needs with the administration.

The three programs have had separate operating budgets for more than 10 years. We expect to share the services of our current Administrative Assistant, and we foresee no need for additional support staff. Our endowed academic prizes are separate.

Additional Advantages

By creating three freestanding departments, we will advance Skidmore's Strategic Plan by strengthening the sciences, broadly defined. In particular, we will create a more visible social science presence at the college, which will highlight those sciences' research and conceptual strengths, as well as the opportunities each provides for undergraduates.

Freestanding departments will also better serve our students. They will have a chair who is one of their instructors and whom they experience as someone familiar with their curriculum, major requirements, study abroad processes, and other program matters. Freestanding departments will help promote a stronger, more coherent sense of community among faculty, students, and alumna/i.