Anthropology Club Minutes for 9.22.08

Our guest of honor was the chair of the anthropology department, Dr. Hitchcock.

Dr. Hitchcock has been at MSU for 2 years, and before that he spend 23 years at the University of Nebraska and 10 years in Africa.

He discussed the structure of the anthropology department.

There are approximately 30 anthropologists at MSU.
The largest group is cultural anthropologist as it consists of about 13 people.
  o Some examples of work that is being done:
    ▪ Cultural Resources and power
      • State, resources, environment, international development
      • Social justice
      • Post modernist theory
      • American Indian Studies
There are about 8 archaeologists at MSU
  o Some examples of work that is being done:
    ▪ The Native Americans
    ▪ The Great Lakes region
There are 3 bioanthropologists/physical anthropologists at MSU
  o There is a strength in/focus on
    ▪ Forensic Anthropology
    ▪ But, they are branching out into new directions
There are 3 medical anthropologists at MSU
  o There is a focus in GenCen (The center of gender and global context)

Approximately 70-80% of our anthropology department practices applied anthropology.
  o Some examples of work that is being done:
    ▪ Working with people who have to deal with forced resettlement
    ▪ Social Impact Analysis

Dr. Hitchcock also addressed some other issues:

Despite the different classifications of anthropology, each are bound to the same code of ethics. There is a sort of Hippocratic Oath that anthropologists must deal with: “Do nothing that would harm the people you work with.”

It’s especially important now-a-days to realize that most cultures don’t just want to be studied. They want the anthropologist to work with them and help them.

Also, remember to pay attention to a country’s facts if you’re planning on doing international work. The CIA world fact book is a good resource.
He talked about graduate schools a little too.

It’s important to make sure that you have a wide variety of skills in addition to the skills you learn about anthropology when applying to grad school. Some good suggestions are:

- GIS
- Computer Skills
- Anatomy

Make sure that you talk to your professors about graduate school. Remember, professors are good resources to help you figure out what schools are looking for in their students. Never be afraid to ask questions.

Remember that your statement of purpose is very important. It is one of the main things that schools will evaluate you on.