Federation of Small Anthropology Programs (FOSAP)  
A (probable) Committee of the General Anthropology Division (GAD)  
of the American Anthropological Association

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This Newsletter is the first in what we hope is a long line of Newsletters put out by the Federation of Small Anthropology Programs. As the name implies, the Federation is an organization of and for anthropologists in "small programs." By American Anthropological definition, "small programs" have five or less full-time anthropologists on staff. By a recent count in the 1991 AAA Guide to Departments, "small departments" were the largest of the three categories, with 148 departments regarded as "small;" 104 departments have 6-10 faculty, and are "medium," and 112 have 11 or more anthropologists and are "large." By actual numbers, there are over 500 anthropologists in those 148 "small" departments, and there are many anthropologists who teach in colleges and universities who are not listed in the Guide. We are, therefore, a sizeable group of anthropologists with potentially similar needs, problems, and interests. We hope to explore these similar issues at meetings and through newsletters.

At the Chicago AAA meetings in 1991, Frank Young (San Diego) and I set up an organizational meeting. I sent a letter to every "small" department listed in the Guide, received 49 responses claiming someone from that department would attend the AAA meetings, and 25 additional responses claiming interest in such a unit. There seemed to be a considerable interest in organizing ourselves. Because of the lateness of scheduling, our organizational meeting was of necessity held at a "terrible" time, and not as many people came as we had hoped; we apologize to those who had hoped to attend. Nonetheless, those who came were very enthusiastic. From this meeting came three suggestions:

1) Organize into an official AAA Unit. Unfortunately, the AAA has a moratorium on new units and we could not become a "free-standing" unit. However, GAD, which did not have such a moratorium, seemed a very likely "home" for our group. I was asked to propose membership. Although I met with the Board of Directors in Chicago, they had so much business to attend to, that I was asked to present a proposal in writing. I did so. Although the results are not in yet (and won't be for a while), the President of GAD, Conrad Kottak, the President-Elect, Nancie Gonzalez, and the Secretary-Treasurer, David McCurdy, all voted positively for accepting our group as a standing committee. I feel quite confident that we will be formally accepted, but of course, nothing is official yet. FOSAP has been suggested as the name of our organization.

2) Organize a Special Events panel for 1992 in San Francisco. Frank Young will tell you about that on the reverse side. It looks like a great session and we hope AAA accepts it. Plan to attend!

3) Organize a Business Meeting for San Francisco. I will write up the papers for this meeting and ask for it to be at the noon hour on either Friday or Saturday. Plan to attend!


Patricia Rice, Dept of Soc/Anth, West Virginia University . . .  
Acting co-chairperson
Pat Rice has explained some of what has been going on as she, I, and Angelo Orono (USD) have been working to put together an organization that could represent those of us who live and work in small anthropology programs. I'd like to take a moment to offer some of my thoughts about the need for such an organization.

I feel such an organization could be useful because it would serve two needs I have. First, those of us in small programs are severely limited through most of the year by the fact that we have only a few colleagues from our profession to interact with on a daily, informal basis, thus making professional growth somewhat more problematic than it is likely to be in a large program. Additionally, when I have attended national meetings, I usually felt like an outsider because there have been only occasional opportunities to talk with others who share similar small program limitations and perspectives. An organization such as we are proposing would guarantee a regular, annual clearinghouse for ideas and informal interchange, and it could become the spawning ground for developing networks for ongoing informal exchange for the balance of the year. In short, there would always be a reason to attend national meetings.

Second, small programs lack the political clout that large programs tend to enjoy in the competition for campus resources and recognition. During this period of national belt tightening, it is not unlikely that many small programs will be threatened or even pared down. Individual small programs are almost defenseless against administrative budget slashing tactics, but a small program that could call on the collective support of a national body of small programs could stand a somewhat better chance for survival. Sometimes just the threat of widespread publicity is enough to stem an attack on a program. We can help protect one another. FOSAP is intended to address these and other needs all of us may have.

AT SAN FRANCISCO. For next fall at AAA national meetings, Pat and I have organized a Special Events session that will allow us to explore several topics that should be of interest to all of us in small programs. The list of topics is listed below, along with the names of those responsible for coordinating brief presentations. This session is designed to encourage audience participation, so time will be provided between presentations for comments or questions relevant to the topic on the floor. It is our hope that this panel of topics will serve as a springboard for more elaborated discussions of common problems and solutions at the 1993 meetings. I hope you will join with us for our common good.

1. Multicultural Movements and the Small Program. (Michael Higgins)
2. Curricular Holism and the Small Program. (Pat Rice)
3. Combined Programs: Living with Sociology. (Frank Young)
4. Tenure, Promotion, and the Small Program. (Angelo Orona)
5. Selling the Small Program to Peers and Administrators. (Paul Brown)
6. Funding Perks in Small Programs. (Dan Moerman)

... Frank Young, Dept of Anthropology and Sociology, U of San Diego ... Acting co-chairperson