Master of Arts in Anthropology

What is and why study Anthropology?

Anthropology is the study of past and present human societies. It is one of the most wide-ranging of the academic disciplines. Anthropologists are concerned with the origin, history, and future of our own species, so the field is as diverse as people are.

There are four main subdisciplines of anthropology: Archaeology is concerned with studying the human past based on the material culture left behind. Biological or physical anthropology is concerned with human evolution and variation. Linguistic anthropology focuses on language, its history, and its evolution as a way to understand humans and their culture. Sociocultural anthropology is concerned with analyzing behaviors and describing contemporary and historical cultures. Applied anthropologists employ their subdisciplinary skills outside college and university settings. Anthropology explains the diversity of humanity.

Do you have an interest in people and in their similarities and differences? Would you enjoy discovering how different peoples of the world organize their lives and societies and how they react to varying natural and human-made environments? Are you curious about how people adapt to diverse cultural and biological situations?

As an anthropology student, you will learn about the varied cultures and peoples in the world, delve into the planet’s prehistory, and develop an understanding of the biological aspects of human existence.

Anthropology at KU

The Department of Anthropology at The University of Kansas maintains a commitment to a holistic and integrative approach to studying human beings. In insisting that its students acquire a solid grounding in the evolution and preservation of human biological and cultural diversity, it provides them with the broad training required to understand human interactions and human affairs in a world where long-standing boundary markers between countries, cultures, and races have been negated, blurred, or redefined.

For specific questions about our program, please contact us:
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Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (http://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (http://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Graduate Admission to the Anthropology Program

The Anthropology graduate program only admits 'degree-seeking' applicants. The Graduate Record Examination is recommended but not required for admission; however, to be considered for university fellowships (GTA appointment), GRE scores are required. The graduate program begins at an advanced level. Preparation for the program through completion of an undergraduate major in anthropology is encouraged but not required. Some undergraduate preparation in fields closely related to anthropology, such as biology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, economics, geography, or geology, is strongly recommended. Undergraduate courses in such subjects as biology, philosophy, genetics, computer science, and history are of considerable value to the graduate student in anthropology. Proficiency in a modern foreign language and in statistics is of special importance to candidates for graduate work in anthropology and should be acquired during the undergraduate years. All students entering the program with a bachelor’s degree must enroll in the M.A. program. Admission to the Ph.D. program is ordinarily contingent upon completion of the master’s degree in anthropology. A student with a master’s degree in anthropology from another institution may apply directly to the Ph.D. program.

Submit your graduate application online (http://graduate.ku.edu/ku-graduate-application).

M.A. Degree Requirements

The M.A. program is a general curriculum for students who wish to enter the Ph.D. program in anthropology or who plan to pursue graduate studies only to the M.A. level. Formal requirements for the M.A. include

1. Completion of 30 credit hours of graduate work in anthropology and related disciplines including
   Select three of the following (students lacking a strong anthropological background may be required to select four as determined at the time of admission and in consultation with their advisor):
   - ANTH 701 History of Anthropology
   - ANTH 702 Current Archaeology
   - ANTH 703 Current Biological Anthropology
   - ANTH 704 Current Cultural Anthropology
   - ANTH 706 Current Linguistic Anthropology

2. Completion of the subdiscipline requirements;
3. Completion of the M.A. thesis, non-thesis (research paper accepted for publication or an internship report), or M.A. non-thesis coursework equivalent; and
4. Passing the final M.A. examination.

Handbook for Graduate Students

Detailed information, application deadlines, and general information may be found in the Graduate Student Handbook, available on the Anthropology Graduate website (http://anthropology.ku.edu/helpful-links-graduate-students).