

Master of Arts in Anthropology

What is Anthropology?

Anthropologists are concerned with the origin, history, and future of the human species. Our mission is to further our understanding of past and present human societies in their cultural, biological, and environmental contexts. The discipline provides students the knowledge and skills they will need to navigate these complex, multicultural, and rapidly changing worlds. Because we study what it is to be human, the field is one of the most wide-ranging of the academic disciplines.

There are four main subdisciplines of anthropology. Three are currently taught in our department: Archaeology is concerned with studying the human past based on the material culture left behind. Biological anthropology is concerned with human evolution and variation. Sociocultural anthropology is concerned with the many ways humans organize themselves and create, reproduce, and reject meaningful patterns of life in changing local and global circumstances. Anthropologists across all of the subdisciplines apply holistic, comparative, and evolutionary perspectives and a range of methodologies in their research. We are committed to fieldwork and the application of this knowledge to helping people better understand one another.

Why study Anthropology at KU?

Students have many reasons for pursuing graduate degrees in anthropology. Some are curious about the origins of the human species. Others are fascinated the diversity of human experiences in ancient and modern periods. Some students intend to pursue international careers, where they will use languages and work in cultural contexts very different from those in which they were raised. Others plan to work in museums collecting and curating human cultural resources. Some wish to pursue graduate training in one of the field's subdisciplines, while others seek to use their anthropological training as preparation for professional schools, including law, medicine, public health, journalism, business, and engineering. There are many professions where the broad scientific, humanistic, and multicultural knowledge available through the study of anthropology can be useful— in education, healthcare, law, social work, business, human resources, public affairs, cultural resource management, or laboratory research.

The Anthropology Department at the University of Kansas maintains a holistic and integrative approach to studying human beings. Our world-class program has particular strengths in the Americas in all three subdisciplines, and is committed to engaged research with community partners.

Funding is available for MA students admitted into the Anthropology program.

For specific questions about our program, please contact us:

The University of Kansas
Department of Anthropology
Corinne Butler
Graduate Program Coordinator
E-mail: cebutler@ku.edu

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 (<https://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies/>) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (<https://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 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 will optimally have been acquired during the undergraduate years.

Submit your graduate application online (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>). Other required application materials are:

- A resume or curriculum vitae (CV)
- A writing sample of your best academic work
- A personal statement describing your academic objectives and professional goals that clearly indicates the disciplinary track of interest (i.e., archaeology, biological anthropology, or sociocultural anthropology)
- Applicants who wish to be considered for departmental financial support (GTA or GRA positions, fellowships, etc.) should *clearly* state this in the personal statement
- Transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate study completed
- Three letters of recommendation from faculty members or others with whom you have worked and who know your work well
- Non-native speakers of English must meet English proficiency requirements (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) set by KU Graduate Studies

Most application materials can be uploaded to the online application. GRE scores are not required.

Applicants who are interested in working with a particular faculty member are encouraged to reach out to them directly via email.

More information on application requirements and deadlines is available on the department's website (<https://anthropology.ku.edu/graduate-admission/>).

Students who are interested in enrolling in graduate level coursework in the Department of Anthropology without formal admission to a graduate program at KU are encouraged to apply for graduate non-

degree seeking student status. See the department's website (<https://anthropology.ku.edu/non-degree-seeking/>) for further details.

M.A. Degree Requirements

The M.A. program is a general curriculum for students who wish to earn an M.A. en route to the Ph.D. program in anthropology or who plan to pursue graduate studies only to the M.A. level.

Coursework

Completion of 30 credit hours of graduate work in anthropology and related disciplines is required. At least 50% of coursework for the master's degree must be at the 700 level or above. No more than 6 hours of independent research or thesis credits (ANTH 896, ANTH 897, ANTH 898, ANTH 899, ANTH 996) may count toward the 30 hour total.

Code	Title	Hours
Required Courses		
ANTH 801	Proseminar I in Anthropology	
ANTH 802	Proseminar II in Anthropology	

In addition to the two required Proseminar courses, students must demonstrate competency in a set of Core Topics, including:

1. Professionalism
2. History/Theory in the Four Fields of Anthropology
3. Knowledge in the Area of Specialization
4. Stewardship/Engaged Research
5. Research Methods

All courses must be selected in consultation with the student's faculty advisor.

Core Competencies may be fulfilled in two ways: through completion of relevant courses (with a grade of "B" or better in each), or the submission of research papers deemed satisfactory by their committees. The research paper option could include research papers written outside of regular coursework such as papers written for publication, papers written as a GRA, papers written while a graduate student at an outside institution, etc. The papers, collected in a portfolio, will be evaluated as part of the Master's Final Exam/Qualifying Exam.

Subdisciplines have specific ways from demonstrating Core Competencies, see the Graduate Handbook (<http://anthropology.ku.edu/>) for details.

Master's Final Exam

The M.A. degree will be awarded upon the successful completion of a Master's Final Exam. The Anthropology program offers three options for this exam, including a thesis, project defense, and a research paper. All defense options may result in a grade of Satisfactory, Honors, or Unsatisfactory. In cases of an unsatisfactory grade, the student may repeat the exam only with the approval of the Anthropology Graduate Committee. In no cases may an exam be taken three times.

A. Thesis Option. Students completing the thesis defense option must complete at least one and no more than six hours of ANTH 899 Thesis. The MA thesis proposal should be developed in consultation with the student's principal advisor. A completed thesis should be submitted and defended no later than the sixth semester of enrollment. Conditional on approval by the student's M.A. committee, students must schedule and successfully complete a thesis defense open to the University community

and pass an oral defense of the thesis. The oral defense will consist of a presentation of research, open to the public, followed by a period of examination by the committee in closed session. This option is particularly recommended for students that do not intend to complete a Ph.D.

B. Research Paper Option. Students must complete at least one and no more than six independent research hours of Graduate Research (ANTH 896), Internship Research (ANTH 897), Internship Analysis (ANTH 898). Students may produce or be the primary contributor (e.g. first author) to an appropriate paper publishable by a peer-reviewed journal. The M.A. project proposal must be developed in consultation with the student's principal advisor. The paper should be defended no later than the sixth semester of enrollment. Co-authorship is permitted if the student has primary responsibility for: 1) conceiving the project; 2) collecting new data or analyzing previously collected data; and 3) completing the finished project. Conditional on approval by the M.A. committee, students must schedule and successfully complete a defense open to the University community. The oral defense will consist of a presentation of the research paper, open to the public, followed by a period of examination by the committee in closed session.

C. Other Research Project. Students must complete at least one and no more than six independent research hours of Graduate Research (ANTH 896), Internship Research (ANTH 897), or Internship Analysis (ANTH 898). A project proposal should be developed in consultation with the student's principal advisor. A completed project such as an edited book or monograph, or other scholarly product, such as an online resource, documentary film, or museum exhibition, should be submitted and defended no later than the sixth semester of enrollment. Conditional on approval by the M.A. committee, students must schedule and successfully complete a defense open to the University community. The oral defense will consist of a presentation of the project, open to the public, followed by a period of examination by the committee in closed session.

Continuation to the Ph.D.

Students who wish to continue in the doctoral program must complete a Qualifying Exam. The Qualifying Exam can be taken at the same time as their Master's Final Exam or on a separate occasion (see Ph.D. in Anthropology (<https://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/anthropology/phd/#requirementstext>) section of the catalog under the Qualifying Exam heading for additional details). Following deliberation of the student's qualifications, the master's committee will notify the student and Director of Graduate Studies of their recommendation regarding the student's continuation in Ph.D. level study.

Handbook for Graduate Students

Detailed information, application deadlines, and general information may be found in the Graduate Student Handbook.

University Policies & Requirements

A list of all policies of the Office of Graduate Studies is available in the Policy Library (<https://policy.ku.edu/office/Graduate-Studies/>).