Anthropology

The graduate program in Anthropology at Washington University is a PhD program designed to educate and develop scholars and researchers who study the human condition through time and across cultures. Our graduates apply these skills to academics, business, government, and non-governmental jobs and careers. While candidates may receive an AM degree during the course of their study, the department does not admit students seeking a terminal master's degree. The anthropology department has a strong tradition of graduate student satisfaction and close mentoring by faculty advisers. In addition, graduates of the Washington University Anthropology PhD program have a solid history of placement in highly desirable academic and non-academic positions.

The department has a strong three-field approach with active programs in Archaeology, Sociocultural Anthropology, and Biological Anthropology. Program strengths in Archaeology include the origins of agriculture and pastoralism; paleoethnobotany; zooarchaeology; geoarchaeology, landscape archaeology; and environmental archaeology. Sociocultural Anthropology foci include politics, pluralism and religion; indigenous political movements; the politics of gender and sexuality; fertility and population; global health and the environment; and medical anthropology. Program strengths in Biological Anthropology include human and primate evolution; the ecology and conservation of modern primates; human physiology; quantitative studies of morphology and genetics; and human life history.

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Degree Requirements

**Departmental Requirements and Graduate Student Evaluation Procedures**

These are the general requirements of the Department of Anthropology. Each subdiscipline also has its own additional guidelines and requirements. All students in the PhD program are expected to satisfy the academic performance requirements of the Graduate School, which can be found in the General Requirements section of this *Bulletin*. Similarly, all subdisciplinary requirements are in addition to those set out here for the department as a whole.

A student’s progress is monitored by the entire faculty until they are formally admitted to the doctoral program (usually by the end of the fourth semester). Up until that point, the entire faculty vote upon decisions regarding the student’s evaluation and fulfillment of requirements. From the point at which students are formally admitted to the doctoral program, progress is evaluated by their committee, which will always consist of a minimum of three full-time permanent members of the anthropology faculty. This committee has authority to set specific PhD candidacy requirements for the student. The committee also recommends to the chair that a student be advanced to PhD candidacy.

**Universal Departmental Requirements**

**AM Degree**

1. **Theory Requirement** (Anthro 472 Social Theory and Anthropology). All students are required to take Anthropology 472 in their first year. Under special circumstances this requirement may be delayed or waived by petitioning the entire departmental faculty.

2. **Two Subdisciplinary Course Requirements.** All students must complete at least one course taught by a faculty member of the anthropology department in each of the two subdisciplines other than their own; Anthropology 472 may satisfy the sociocultural requirement. Students with good cause to substitute prior extensive courses in the subdiscipline, especially in the context of a master’s degree at another university, for one or both of the other subdisciplinary requirements, may petition the relevant subdisciplinary faculty to do so.

3. **Courses with Six Faculty.** All graduate students are required to have had courses with at least six different departmental faculty members. Team-taught courses may count for both faculty members.

4. **Credit Hours.** The anthropology department requires 36 credit hours for the award of an AM degree without thesis; 24 credit hours are required for an AM degree with thesis.

5. **Petition for the Award of the Master’s Degree.** Once a student has completed all requirements for the AM degree, the student and their adviser submit a petition to the chair; the chair circulates the petition to the entire faculty and forwards it to the Graduate School. This petition should include documentation of satisfactory completion of all the Graduate School requirements (including cumulative credits, thesis if one was done, and grade point average), the four requirements listed above (1-4), as well as any special requirements set by the student’s subdiscipline (refer to the relevant subdisciplinary requirements: Archaeology (http://anthropology.artsci.wustl.edu/graduate/archaeology), Biological Anthropology (http://anthropology.artsci.wustl.edu/graduate/biological), Sociocultural Anthropology (http://anthropology.artsci.wustl.edu/graduate/sociocultural)). Sample petitions are available in the academic coordinator’s office (http://anthropology.artsci.wustl.edu/jacobsen_kirsten).

**PhD Degree**

All AM degree requirements are also requirements for doctoral candidacy whether the student actually receives the AM degree or not. Continuation for the PhD involves being advanced to doctoral candidacy.

1. **Student-Specific Requirements for Doctoral Candidacy.** Students may be asked by their committees to fulfill additional requirements, directly relevant to their doctoral dissertation research, prior to admission to candidacy. These may include a foreign language or specialized preparation outside of the anthropology department in other areas such as statistics, computer programming, or laboratory techniques. Students will be formally notified by their committees of such additional requirements.

2. **Defense of the Doctoral Proposal.** All students must defend a doctoral proposal prior to admission to PhD candidacy. Proposals must be defended before a faculty committee consisting of an adviser and at least two other permanent members of the anthropology faculty.

3. **Petition for Admission to Doctoral Candidacy.** Once a student’s doctoral proposal has been successfully defended, and all other requirements set by the Graduate School, anthropology department, subdiscipline, and the student’s committee have been met, the student and adviser should submit a petition to the chair for advancement to candidacy; the chair will then inform the entire faculty and forward the petition to the Graduate School. Petitions should be in the form of a memorandum explaining how all of the requirements were satisfied. Sample petitions are available in the academic coordinator’s office.

4. **Teaching Requirement.** As part of the professionalization of graduate students in Anthropology, the department requires all students to participate in a minimum of five Mentored Teaching Experiences. All students must also attend the Graduate School Teaching Orientation.
5. **Professionalization Requirement** Students in the fifth and sixth years are required to take the year-long department graduate professional seminar if they are in residence. This seminar is designed to support graduate students in their post-fieldwork period, to help them attain relevant professional experience and mentoring, and to allow them to enhance their ability to find employment following graduation.

6. **The Doctoral Dissertation.** The doctoral dissertation must constitute an integrated, coherent original work, whose parts are logically connected to each other. Normally, the doctoral dissertation consists of a sequence of integrated chapters that introduce the dissertation research, provide the background and the methods for the research, present and interpret the results, and then tie the various portions of the dissertation together in a concluding chapter, with appropriate citations. In this context, it may be appropriate for the dissertation to consist in part of research articles that have been written, and may be published (refer to Criteria for Acceptance of Collected Articles for a Dissertation (PDF) [link](http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/gsas/anthro/Article_Publish_Policy_Anthropology.pdf)), by the graduate student during the course of the doctoral research. Whether this dissertation format is appropriate for a given dissertation (within a subfield that accepts such a dissertation) needs to be determined a priori by the student and their doctoral committee. Should it be deemed appropriate, it must have an introductory chapter that provides the theme and core questions of the dissertation research and that explains the relationship(s) between the constituent chapters and parts, and it must also have a concluding chapter that brings together the information and ideas expressed in the thesis, relates them to the introduction, and shows how they constitute a coherent whole. Refer to “Minimal Requirements for Dissertations” in the Graduate School Dissertation Guide [link](http://graduateschool.wustl.edu/guides-0) for the Graduate School requirements regarding a dissertation that includes previously written materials.

**Specific Subfield Requirements**

Please visit the following websites for more information regarding specific subfield requirements:

- [Archaeology](http://anthropology.artsci.wustl.edu/graduate/archaeology)
- [Biological Anthropology](http://anthropology.artsci.wustl.edu/graduate/biological)
- [Sociocultural Anthropology](http://anthropology.artsci.wustl.edu/graduate/sociocultural)