

Anthropology, PhD, Sociocultural Anthropology Concentration

Doctoral Candidacy

To earn a PhD at Washington University, a student must complete all courses required by their department; maintain satisfactory academic progress; pass certain examinations; fulfill residence and Mentored Experience Requirements; write, defend, and submit a dissertation; and file an Intent to Graduate. For a general layout of doctoral degree general requirements in Arts & Sciences, including an explanation of Satisfactory Academic Progress, students should review the Doctoral Degree Academic Information page of the Arts & Sciences *Bulletin*.

Program Requirements

- **Total Units Required: 60**
- **Degree Length: 6 years**
 - Students are expected to complete the degree within six years (12 semesters).
 - **Note:** Students must be enrolled in 9 graduate credits each semester to retain full-time status. As students complete their course work, if enrolled in fewer than 9 graduate credits, they must enroll in a specific Arts & Sciences graduate course that will show 0 units but does count as full-time status. Students should connect with their department to ensure proper enrollment prior to Add/Drop.
 - Anthropology assures funding for up to 12 semesters for full-time students in good academic standing.

Universal Departmental Requirements

The following is an abbreviated list of requirements that apply to all concentrations of the PhD in Anthropology. Each concentration also has its own additional guidelines and requirements. A more comprehensive description of the requirements (including additional requirements for each of the three concentrations: archaeology, biological anthropology, and sociocultural anthropology) can be found in the Graduate Student Handbook (PDF). All students in the PhD program are expected to satisfy the academic performance requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, which can be found in the General Requirements section of this *Bulletin*. Similarly, all concentration requirements are in addition to those set out here for the department as a whole.

Degree Length and Course Units

Students are expected to complete the degree in six years. All students must complete a minimum of 60 units of graduate-level course work for the PhD, but they must not exceed 72 units of credit. A typical semester course load for the first year of study is 12 units. The semester course load for the second and third years is typically 9 units. After 60 units have been completed, students will work with their advisors to identify the appropriate registration options to maintain full-time status.

Master's Degree

The department does not admit students for a stand alone master's degree; completion of the MA degree is a required step in the process of earning the PhD

Students are expected to receive their MA degree by the end of their second year or fourth semester of full-time study.

The universal requirements for the MA in Anthropology are as follows:

- **Theory requirement.** All students are required to take Anthro 5472 Social Theory and Anthropology during their first year. Under special circumstances, this requirement may be delayed or waived by petitioning the departmental faculty. This request should be initiated through the student's advisor.
- **Two interdisciplinary course requirements.** Graduate students earning a PhD in Anthropology are expected to have familiarity across the subdisciplines of anthropology. To this end, all MA students must complete at least one course taught by a faculty member in the anthropology department in each of the two concentrations other than their own. Anthro 5472 Social Theory and Anthropology may satisfy the sociocultural requirement. Courses taken in other concentrations should strengthen the student's understanding of the subfield, complement their research, and ideally, enhance their ability to teach across subfields. Students with good cause to substitute prior extensive course work in the subdiscipline — especially in the context of a master's degree from another university — for one or both of the other interdisciplinary requirements may petition the relevant subdisciplinary faculty to do so.
- **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.
- **Credit units.** The Department of Anthropology requires 36 credit units for the award of an MA degree without a thesis.
- **Petition for the award of the master's degree.** Once a student has completed all requirements for the MA degree, the student and their advisor submit a petition to the chair. The chair circulates the petition to the entire faculty and reports the successful completion of requirements to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

Doctoral Candidacy

Although the Department of Anthropology only accepts students who wish to pursue the PhD, students are not officially admitted to candidacy for the PhD immediately upon entry into the program. Admittance to candidacy for the PhD program requires the successful

completion of the requirements of the MA degree as well as of the requirements listed below. Continuation for the PhD requires that the student be advanced to doctoral candidacy. The successful defense of the doctoral proposal and admission to doctoral candidacy are expected by the end of the third year.

- **Credit units.** Students must have completed 48 units before filing the petition to advance to candidacy.
- **Forming the Doctoral Research Advisory Committee (RAC).** Students are encouraged to work with a variety of faculty while shaping their dissertation proposal. Prior to scheduling their dissertation proposal defense (Qualifying Exam) during their third year, students must formally assemble a Doctoral RAC in consultation with their advisor. This committee must consist of a minimum of three full-time tenured or tenure-track members of the Anthropology faculty who must approve the dissertation proposal defense (Qualifying Exam) and also sign the RAC Form and — along with the department chair — the Notice of Title, Scope, and Procedure of Dissertation. This committee typically forms the basis of the Dissertation Defense Committee.
- **Student-specific requirements for doctoral candidacy.** Prior to admission to candidacy, students may be asked by their committees to fulfill additional requirements that are directly relevant to their doctoral dissertation research. These requirements may include a foreign language or specialized training outside of the anthropology department in areas such as statistics, computer programming, or laboratory techniques. Students will be formally notified by their advisor of such additional requirements.
- **Qualifying Exam.** All students must defend a doctoral proposal prior to admission to PhD candidacy. PhD proposal defenses should be carried out by December 15 of the student's third year and must be carried out no later than the end of the third year. Proposals must be defended before the RAC.
- **Petition for admission to doctoral candidacy.** After a student's doctoral proposal has been successfully defended and after all other requirements set by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences; the Department of Anthropology; the subdiscipline; and the student's committee have been met, the student and their advisor should submit a petition to the chair for advancement to candidacy. The chair will then inform the entire faculty and report the successful advancement to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

Qualifying Examinations

Progress toward the PhD is contingent upon the student passing examinations that are variously called *preliminary*, *qualifying*, *general*, *comprehensive*, or *major field exams*. The qualifying process varies according to the program. In some programs, it consists of a series of incremental, sequential, and cumulative exams over a considerable time. In others, the exams are held during a relatively short period of time. Exams may be replaced by one or more papers. The program, which determines the structure and schedule of the required examinations, is responsible for notifying the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, of the student's outcome, whether successful or unsuccessful.

The completion of the Qualifying Exam in the Anthropology is the successful defense of the dissertation proposal.

Mentored Experience Requirements

Doctoral students at Washington University must complete a department-defined Mentored Experience. The Mentored Experience Requirement is a doctoral degree milestone that is notated on the student's transcript when complete. Each department has an established Mentored Experience Implementation Plan in which the number of units that a student must earn through Mentored Teaching Experience(s) and/or Mentored Professional Experience(s) is defined. The Mentored Experience Implementation Plans outline how doctoral students within the discipline will be mentored to achieve competencies in teaching at basic and advanced levels. Some departments may elect to include Mentored Professional Experiences as an avenue for completing some units of the Mentored Experience Requirement. Doctoral students will enroll in LGS 6XXX Mentored Teaching Experience or LGS 7020 Mentored Professional Experience to signify their progression toward completing the overall Mentored Experience Requirement for the degree.

The Doctoral Dissertation

A Research Advisory Committee (RAC) must be created no later than the end of the student's third year; departments may set shorter timelines (e.g., by the end of the student's second year) for this requirement. As evidence of the mastery of a specific field of knowledge and of the capacity for original scholarly work, each candidate must complete a dissertation that is approved by their RAC.

A Title, Scope & Procedure Form for the dissertation must be signed by the committee members and by the program chair. It must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, at least 6 months before the degree is expected to be conferred or before beginning the fifth year of full-time enrollment, whichever is earlier.

A Doctoral Dissertation Guide & Template that give instructions regarding the format of the dissertation are available on the website of the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. Both should be read carefully at every stage of dissertation preparation.

The Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, requires each student to make the full text of the dissertation available to the committee members for their review at least 1 week before the defense. Most degree programs require 2 or more weeks for the review period; students should check with their faculty.

The Dissertation Defense

Approval of the written dissertation by the RAC is necessary before the student can orally defend their dissertation. The Dissertation Defense Committee that observes and examines the student's defense consists of at least five members, who normally meet these criteria:

- Three of the five must be full-time Washington University faculty members or, for programs offered by Washington University-affiliated partners, full-time members of a Washington University-affiliated partner institution who are authorized to supervise PhD students and who have appropriate expertise in the proposed field of study; one of these three must be the PhD student's primary thesis advisor, and one may be a member of the emeritus faculty. A fourth member may come from inside or outside the student's program. The fifth member must be from outside the student's program; this fifth member may be a Washington University research professor or lecturer, a professor from another university, or a scholar from the private sector or government who holds a doctorate and maintains an active research program.
- Three of the five normally come from the student's degree program; at least one of the five must not.

All committees must be approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, regardless of whether they meet the normal criteria.

The committee is appointed by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, upon the request of the degree program. The student is responsible for making the full text of the dissertation accessible to their committee members for their review in advance of the defense. Faculty and graduate students who are interested in the subject of the dissertation are normally welcome to attend all or part of the defense but may ask questions only at the discretion of the committee members. Although there is some variation among degree programs, the defense ordinarily focuses on the dissertation itself and its relation to the student's field of expertise.

Submission of the Dissertation

After the defense, the student must submit an electronic copy of the dissertation online to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. The submission website requires students to choose among publishing and copyrighting services offered by ProQuest's ETD Administrator. The degree program is responsible for delivering the final approval form, signed by the committee members at the defense and then by the program chair or director, to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. Students who defend their dissertations successfully have not yet completed their PhD requirements; they finish earning their degree only when their dissertation submission has been accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

Concentration Requirements

Master's Degree Requirements for Sociocultural Anthropology First-Year Mentoring Meeting

All students are required to meet with the Sociocultural Anthropology faculty by the end of the first year. All students must prepare and submit a detailed mentoring plan that lays out anticipated courses and the field or lab training necessary for the successful completion of years two and three. This document must be submitted two weeks in advance of the scheduled first-year meeting with the Sociocultural Anthropology faculty.

Required Course Work

Students must complete at least two of the following three Anthropology courses:

- Anthro 5124 Argumentation Through Ethnography
- Anthro 5712 Seminar: Advanced Social Theory
- Anthro 501 Seminar: Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology

Second-Year Paper

During the third semester, the student will write a second-year paper. Section topics and readings are to be worked out with committee members before the end of the second semester, and the paper must be submitted before December 15. At the beginning of the fourth semester, the committee and the student meet to discuss the work and provide constructive critique. (In cases of unsatisfactory progress, the department will adhere to Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, guidelines on academic standing and probation). A final draft of the paper is submitted by March 15.

Requirements for Advancement to PhD Candidacy in Sociocultural Anthropology

Items 1 through 4 below must be completed before the student's committee and the department can recommend to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, that the student advance to PhD candidacy.

1. **Required Courses:** The student must complete the following required courses in Sociocultural Anthropology: Anthro 5124 Argumentation Through Ethnography; Anthro 501 Seminar: Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology; and Anthro 5011 Methods: Proposal Writing.
2. **Second-Year Mentoring Meeting:** The student is required to have a mentoring meeting no later than the end of the second year of study. This meeting will usually coincide with the second-year paper/AM defense. The purpose of this meeting is to review the student's progress and to update the mentoring plan submitted during the first year.

3. **Third-Year Mentoring Meeting:** The student is required to have a mentoring meeting no later than the end of the third year of study. This meeting will usually coincide with the dissertation proposal defense. The purpose of this meeting is to review progress and to update the mentoring plan submitted during the first year and revised during the second year.
4. **Doctoral Proposal and Hearing:** The student is required to complete and receive approval of a doctoral proposal in the form of one of the major external grant proposals (e.g., the National Science Foundation, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, or the Social Science Research Council). Students should consult with their faculty advisors at the start of the third year about the format of the proposal. By the end of the fifth semester, the student should have held a proposal hearing before a faculty committee consisting of the faculty advisor and at least two other permanent members of the anthropology faculty.

Post-Candidacy Requirements

1. **Fieldwork Write-Up Outline:** Within 60 days after the final field season, a detailed outline of the dissertation must be provided to the student's Research Advisory Committee (Doctoral Committee).
2. **Post-Fieldwork Meetings:** The student must meet with their dissertation committee every year. *Scheduling annual meetings with the candidate's committee is the responsibility of the candidate.*

Please consult the Graduate Student Handbook (PDF) for more information regarding specific requirements for each concentration.

Master's Degree Along the Way/ In Lieu of a PhD

Normally, the Department of Anthropology does not offer a standalone master's degree. However, if a student fails to maintain satisfactory progress toward the completion of the PhD, they may withdraw from the PhD program with a master's degree in lieu of a PhD if all requirements for the AM have been met.