

ANTHROPOLOGY - MASTER OF ARTS (MA)

Departmental Subdisciplines

Anthropology in the United States is traditionally divided into four subdisciplines: archaeology, biological, cultural and linguistic. CU Boulder offers terminal MA degrees in two subdisciplines: Archaeology and Cultural Anthropology.

Archaeology

The archaeology subdiscipline provides continuous geographic coverage of ancient societies from the Plains of North America through the Southwest and Mesoamerica to the Intermediate Area. The native societies range from egalitarian hunter-gatherers through middle range societies to city-states and empires. The faculty's theoretical and topical interests include human ecology, ethnoarchaeology, agency and social theory, lithic and ceramic analyses, remote sensing and geophysical applications in archaeology.

Archaeology relates to cultural anthropology in significant ways, since much archaeological theory is derived from cultural theory. Given the vast diachronic interests of archaeology, significant archaeological theory is also derived independently from ethnography. Ethnoarchaeology spans the two subdisciplines, as archaeologists study the material culture of functioning contemporary societies to learn how better to make inferences about past behavior. Both archaeology and cultural anthropology study ethnic and political groups in contact with each other, including topics of ethnohistory, migration, acculturation, trade and tribute, conquest, information sharing, elite emulation and the rise of multiethnic powers.

Cultural Anthropology

Cultural anthropologists study the cultural patterns and social institutions that shape how people think and behave in human communities across the globe, including their own society. While their findings are frequently comparative or cross-cultural in scope, cultural anthropologists undertake ethnographic studies through intensive participant-observation in particular cultures, subcultures, communities and regions. The insights of cultural anthropology are derived from ethnographic methods, including long-term fieldwork, interviews, participant-observation and other qualitative research techniques. Among the topical interests of the cultural faculty are gender and sexuality, human ecology, environmental anthropology, medical anthropology, science and technology studies, nationalism and ethnic identity, capitalism and markets, tourism, and history and memory. Areas of regional expertise in the department include Latin America, Native America, Atlantic Canada, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Tibet, East Africa, the Caribbean, Polynesia and Western Europe, as well as their respective diasporas around the world. To learn more about the expertise and current research of the cultural anthropology faculty, please visit the department website (<https://www.colorado.edu/anthropology/people/faculty/>), where you will find up-to-date and detailed profiles of each faculty member.

Dual Degree Program - Anthropology (MA/MBA)

Learn more on the dual degree(s) tab (p. 2).

Requirements

Prerequisites

To be considered for admission as a regular degree student, applicants for the terminal MA degree should have a minimum undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 (4.00 = A). Graduate Record Examination scores for verbal and quantitative aptitude tests are required. Letters of recommendation and evidence of previous anthropologically oriented experience and work are carefully considered.

Application Requirements

Inquiries about application procedures, processes and administration should be directed to the main departmental office via email at anthro@colorado.edu. Students who hope to work with specific faculty members can contact them individually with questions about advising or research expertise. Applications must be completed and submitted no later than December 1 for international students and January 15 for all other applicants.

Course Requirements

Additional information about other specific areas of specialization and other requirements for the degree may be obtained by consulting the Department of Anthropology Graduate Handbook and referencing the Master's Degree Requirements section. Information can also be obtained by contacting the Department of Anthropology directly anthro@colorado.edu

Archaeology Subdiscipline

The terminal MA track in archaeology is for students intending to earn only an MA degree who enter the program with BA, BS or non-anthropology MA or PhD degrees. The degree is designed for students who wish to pursue careers outside of academia (e.g., Cultural Resource Management, government service, etc.). The terminal MA is a non-thesis degree, but does require that students take a 3- credit independent research course (ANTH 7840) that will include the completion of a publishable paper and an oral defense of that paper by their MA committee.

| Code | Title | Credit Hours |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Core Requirements | | |
| | One graduate-level anthropology seminar not in the student's subdiscipline (any non-split-level graduate seminar, including bridging seminars ANTH 7200) | 3 |
| ANTH 5000 | Quantitative Methods in Anthropology | 3 |
| Other Required Courses | | |
| ANTH 5345 | Archaeological Theory | 3 |
| | One 5000-level archaeology course that requires analysis of archaeological materials using laboratory methods. Examples include: ANTH 5245, ANTH 5380, ANTH 5919 | 3 |
| ANTH 5400 | Research Methods in Archaeology 2 (Epistemology, Proposal Writing) | 3 |
| ANTH 5455 | Epistemology in Archaeology | 3 |
| ANTH 5460 | Archaeology and Contemporary Society | 3 |
| ANTH 7840 | Independent Research (Publishable Paper) | 3 |
| | Two elective graduate courses chosen with advisor, one of which must be a 7000-level seminar in archaeology | 6 |
| Total Credit Hours | | 30 |

Biological Anthropology Subdiscipline

Biological anthropology students will apply directly to the PhD program in biological anthropology (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/anthropology/anthropology-doctor-philosophy-phd/>).

Cultural Anthropology Subdiscipline

The terminal MA track in cultural anthropology is for students intending to earn only an MA degree and who enter the program with an undergraduate degree or with graduate training in an unrelated area. The terminal MA is a non-thesis degree, but does require that students take ANTH 7840, a 3-credit independent research course (in the semester in which they will complete 30 credits of coursework) that will include the completion and defense of an approximately 30-page paper, which will be evaluated by the student's committee.

| Code | Title | Credit Hours |
|----------------------------|--|--------------|
| Required Coursework | | |
| ANTH 5780 | Core Course-Cultural Anthropology (Core 1) | 3 |
| ANTH 5785 | Advanced Seminar in Cultural Anthropology (Core 2) | 3 |
| ANTH 7300 | Seminar: Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology | 3 |
| | One graduate-level anthropology seminar not in the student's subdiscipline (any non-split-level graduate seminar, including bridging seminars ANTH 7200). | 3 |
| ANTH 7840 | Independent Research (30-page paper) | 3 |
| | Two additional graduate courses at 5000-level or above, to be selected in consultation with advisor, including ANTH 5840 guided study/directed readings ¹ | 6 |
| | Three 7000-level seminars in cultural anthropology. (Examples: ANTH 7000, ANTH 7010, ANTH 7015, ANTH 7600 or ANTH 7620.) | 9 |
| Total Credit Hours | | 30 |

¹ Please note: 6 maximum credit hours for ANTH 5840 guided study/directed readings.

Dual Degree Program

Anthropology (MA/MBA)

The MBA/MA in anthropology dual-degree program enables students to earn an MBA and an MA in anthropology simultaneously over three or four years depending on the student's subdiscipline in anthropology. Students in this MBA/MA program pursue careers in managing the business aspects of archaeological projects, working in the growing field of corporate cultural anthropology and ethnography or museum management.