

HUNTER COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
MA STUDENT HANDBOOK

Today, humanity faces issues of growing complexity, at both the local and global levels. From climate change to violence, racial injustice to economic inequality, the world is at once more integrated and more fractured than at any time in recent memory. The Department of Anthropology at Hunter College is uniquely positioned to face these challenges given its fundamentally interdisciplinary, historical, cross-cultural, and evolutionary perspective. As anthropologists we strive to understand and find solutions to pressing as well as long-neglected issues through our scholarship, teaching, and public engagement. We train our students to acquire imaginative, flexible, and sensitive eyes and minds to analyze what is invisible and unspoken, to develop the ability to draw links between the local and the global, and to become engaged citizens.

The Department of Anthropology maintains its century-long tradition of introducing students and the wider community to the most significant contributions anthropologists have made to the study of humanity through research and teaching in the four subfields—cultural anthropology, biological anthropology, archaeology, and linguistic anthropology. We believe that current and future advances in the discipline require an understanding of the cultural, biological, and historical roots of human behavior. We seek to advance the discipline’s understanding of what it means to be human through a holistic program of intellectual inquiry and practice that engages with the central questions of our time.

The faculty today research a wide range of critical issues drawing on the findings, methodologies, and theoretical approaches of the four subfields. These issues include the growing inequalities in the distribution of food, the origins of complex social formations, state- and non-state-sponsored violence, large-scale dislocations and migrations, climate change and its consequences, the evolution of our species, nutrition and disease, and the human rights of vulnerable populations. In our classes, laboratories, and field sites, students study the choices different populations have made—over time and under different environmental, social, and cultural conditions—in response to, or as agents of, changing technologies, new forms of knowledge, and contradictory global connections.

Through a combination of classroom, laboratory, and field experiences, we train students to conduct sophisticated empirical research on both the molecular and global scale. In some cases their projects take them back in time over tens of thousands, even millions, of years to the days of our hominin ancestors. In others they remain in the present and focus on some of the social, economic and environmental challenges that are transforming the lives of people today in almost every part of the world. In this way anthropology as a field of inquiry remains exciting, engaged, and relevant to how we understand where we as a species have been, where we are today, and where we may head in the future.

GRADUATE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A substantial background in cultural anthropology, biological anthropology, anthropological archaeology, and linguistics offers students the training required to go forward to make important contributions in their subsequent careers, whether in academia, the private sector, or government service.

Most MA courses are offered in the evening session beginning at 5:30 pm. This includes all of our required courses in each of the subfields.

Students more explicitly focused in biological anthropology typically work in a lab-based environment on their MA project. Labs normally operate during typical business hours, according to the needs of the laboratory and its supervisors.

A list of our courses being offered in a particular semester can be found on our website:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/anthropology/courses>

The Department encourages the involvement of graduate students in ongoing research, when appropriate, and in directing independent student-initiated research projects. The Department further emphasizes the development of scholarly writing skills and, in concert with College policy, we encourage writing and research assignments in all courses.

Admissions Policy

Admissions are administered by the College's Graduate Admissions Office:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/graduateadmissions>

Admission to the MA in Anthropology is based on a personal statement, student transcripts, letters of recommendation, and Graduate Record Examination scores. Many applicants, for example, have little or no previous experience in anthropology, or may hold graduate degrees in related fields. Such evidence of previous academic success generally carries considerable weight. For applicants who have been out of school for some time, the nature of job experience is clearly important (for example, some students have current or previous employment with the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, the American Museum of Natural History, and similar institutions).

Before applying to the program, students are strongly encouraged to acquaint themselves with the faculty and their ongoing work by consulting faculty websites (<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/anthropology/faculty-staff/full-time-faculty>). Faculty are most qualified to supervise students that have interests similar to their own. The best way to see if the Department of Anthropology is the best match for you is to read the work of the faculty members with whom you think you may be interested in working. You are encouraged to contact our faculty to discuss your interest in the department. Faculty are eager to supervise studies that fall within their areas of expertise.

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY: In cultural anthropology, our faculty have the following expertise:

- Agrarian Studies (Edelman)
- Anthropology of Education (Hodges)
- Diaspora and Transnationalism (Brown)
- Economic Anthropology (Edelman)
- Gender (Brown)
- Human Rights (Edelman, Hodges, Koga)
- Legal Anthropology (Coleman, Koga)
- Medical Anthropology (Susser)
- Middle East Studies (Shannon)
- Migration and Refugees (Shannon)
- Music, Art, Ethnomusicology (Shannon)
- Political Anthropology (Coleman, Edelman, Koga, Susser)

Postcolonial Studies (Coleman, Koga, Shannon)
Prison Education and Reform (Hodges)
Race and Nation, including US race relations (Brown, Hodges)
Religion (Shannon)
Social Movements (Edelman)
Technology (Coleman)
Urban Anthropology (Brown, Coleman, Koga, Susser)

ARCHAEOLOGY: In archaeology, our faculty focus broadly on:

New York City (Parry)
The Near East (Johnson)
Complex Societies (Johnson)
Early Agriculture (Parry)
Environmental Archeology (McGovern)
Lithic Technology (Parry)
Mesoamerica (Parry)
Zooarcheology (McGovern)
Historical Ecology & Climate Change (McGovern)
The North Atlantic and Circumpolar North (McGovern)

LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY: Please note that we have one full-time faculty member that specializes in linguistic anthropology, Christina Zarcodoolas, who specializes in the following areas:

Sociolinguistics
Health Literature
Language and Public Health
Language and Technology

BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY: In biological anthropology, our training is explicitly from an evolutionary perspective. We specialize in the following areas:

Primate and Human Evolution (Gilbert, Pontzer, Steiper)
Primate Ecology and Behavior (Baden, Rothman)
Primate Conservation (Baden, Rothman)
Primate and Human Energetics (Pontzer, Rothman)
Primate and Human Locomotion (Pontzer)
Primate and Human Genetics (Baden, Steiper)

Students interested in biological anthropology are especially encouraged to contact faculty in these specialties before applying. We are particularly interested in mentoring students that cross these multiple perspectives within biological anthropology. Please note that we do not have any courses or faculty that specialize in forensic anthropology.

Degree Requirements

Students must complete 30 credit hours of course work. Coursework includes the required introductory courses in the four subfields (ANTH 701 Ethnology; ANTH 750 Archaeology; ANTH 770 Linguistics; ANTH 790 Biological Anthropology) and 18 credit hours of elective credit. In addition, all students must pass a foreign language examination (or with approval of the Graduate Advisor, a course in statistical analysis or quantitative methods), and write a master's thesis. Students must receive a grade of B or above to have a course count toward the MA.

Up to two courses, including any transfer credit, may be taken outside the department, subject to approval by the Graduate Advisor.

Up to two sections of Independent Research (ANTH 785/786) may count toward the degree.

Statistics and Language Examinations

The Department requires an ability to read scholarly work in a major non-English research language, and/or a basic working knowledge of descriptive and inferential statistics. Language examinations are offered once each semester and may be repeated until satisfactory performance is attained. They are administered by the Graduate Advisor and graded by an appropriate faculty member or other language expert.

Advising and the Thesis

The Graduate Advisor is the main point of contact for incoming students and can advise the students on the requirements of the program, administrative necessities, and course planning.

All students must meet with the Graduate Advisor during their first semester to begin the process of selecting a primary thesis advisor. In biological anthropology, thesis advisors are assigned to students at the time of application. For other subfields, students must choose a thesis advisor from the full-time faculty members in the department to advise their MA projects.

Students are expected to start thinking about their MA thesis projects from day one in the program. By the second semester the student should have an idea of her/his thesis project, and should ask a faculty member to supervise the project. Please be strategic in choosing courses: taking classes is the best way for students to get to know the faculty members and vice versa. Developing a productive working relationship with the faculty is key to successfully completing the thesis. Working with a student is by mutual agreement and the faculty member must accept to supervise the student. The student and thesis advisor together select a second reader (not necessarily from the Hunter faculty or from the Anthropology Department) when the work reaches the first draft stage if not before.

Degree Audit Filing Process

All students must apply online for graduation in the first weeks of the semester in which they expect to finish the degree requirements. For deadlines and the thesis filing process, please see: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/artsci/repository/files/graduate-documents/filing-process-for-graduation.pdf>

For any additional questions relating to this process, please contact the Degree Audit Unit-Registrar's Office at degree.audit@hunter.cuny.edu.

Guidelines for Preparation of the Master's Thesis

Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal should be brief. It should contain (not necessarily in this order): (1) a statement of hypotheses or research questions; (2) an outline of methods or procedures that will address the hypotheses or research questions; (3) an argument for the significance of the proposed research; (4) a preliminary list of sources; and (5) a short outline of the proposed thesis. The proposal and outline may be modified during the research and writing period with the approval of the candidate's faculty sponsor.

Thesis Advisor and Second Reader

The candidate must select a thesis advisor who is a full-time member of the Hunter Anthropology faculty. The faculty advisor must approve the thesis proposal by signing the cover page. The candidate should then give a copy of the approved proposal to the Graduate Advisor. The second reader of the thesis should be selected in consultation with the faculty sponsor. She or he may be a Hunter faculty member or somebody else with relevant expertise who agrees to serve as a reader.

It is important that students submit their drafts to their thesis advisors and the second readers early in the semester in which they plan to graduate. This will allow time to receive feedback, which students must incorporate before completing the final drafts. Only final drafts that are approved by the thesis advisors and the second reader can be deposited.

Thesis Format

The approved thesis must be deposited online before the due date set forth by the department. It is very important that students upload their theses before the departmental deadline, which is set earlier than the deadline set by the Dean's Office (typically the first week of December for the Fall semester, and the last week of April for the Spring semester). Once the thesis is uploaded, it has to go through multiple approval processes before getting the final approval by the Dean.

The thesis should be prepared according to the guidelines of the School of Arts and Sciences. The thesis format can be found here: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/artsci/graduate-education/guidelines-for-preparing-masters-theses-in-arts-sciences>

Thesis text should be typed using a legible font such as Arial, Courier, or Times New Roman. All margins of both text and illustrations must be **one inch**. The text is to be double-spaced, except for quotations of more than four lines, which will be set apart (single-spaced and indented). Footnotes and bibliography will be single-spaced, with double spacing between notes

and entries. Pages, including pages of illustrative material, bibliography, and appendices are to be typed or scanned and numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals.

Quotations of more than four lines should be indented. Unless the thesis advisor and the candidate decide otherwise, citations should follow the style of the *American Anthropologist*. Pages, including all tables and illustrations, must be numbered. The title page should use the format specified in the guidelines of the School of Arts and Sciences (see the above link). The latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style is a good source for answering other stylistic questions relating to the thesis.

No ink insertions are allowed. Striking over or crossing out an error is not permitted.

Illustrations, graphics, charts, and photographs must be scanned or produced with an appropriate computer program. Graphic materials must include a descriptive caption which includes the author and original source. Generally, all graphic materials should be scaled to fit the electronic page size of 8 1/2 by 11 inches. If and when appropriate, other sizes can be accepted. The graduate program and the library liaison for CUNY Academic Works, [Mason Brown](#), should be consulted for technical guidance on uploading illustrations and permissions for copyrighted materials.

The content of the thesis should include the following, when applicable, in order as listed:

- Title Page
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures
- List of Tables
- Title of Chapters
- Appendices
- References

In addition, for all electronic submissions, degree candidates should be prepared to upload into the online repository an informative abstract of no more than 50 words, a list of ten keywords, and a CUNY Academic Works submission agreement.

Submission of First Draft

The candidate should normally allow *at least* six weeks for the thesis advisor and second reader to comment on the first draft. The first draft submission date is determined by the thesis advisor in consultation with the candidate and the second reader.

Submission of Final Draft

The candidate must submit the final draft to the thesis advisor at least three weeks before the departmental deadline for deposit of the approved thesis in the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Only after the thesis advisor and the second reader sign off the final draft, the candidate can deposit the approved thesis by uploading it online.

Online Deposit of Approved Thesis

The candidate is required to deposit the thesis online. Detailed instructions can be found here: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/artsci/repository/files/graduate-documents/step-by-step-guide-for-graduate-students_2016.pdf

Binding Fee

The candidate is required to pay a thesis binding fee at the Bursar's Office. The receipt must accompany the copies of the thesis deposited at the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

Publication

Publications based in whole or in part on the thesis should acknowledge that the research was undertaken for a MA thesis in the Department of Anthropology, Hunter College, City University of New York.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I take MA Program courses as a non-matriculated student? The Anthropology Admissions Committee occasionally recommends that candidates who seem promising but who lack a strong anthropology background come to Hunter first as non-matriculated students. These students can then deepen their knowledge of the field and get to know the faculty. After one or two semesters (and a maximum of 12 credits with grades of B or better), they may apply for full matriculation. These credits may then be applied to the MA degree.

What kind of financial aid is available for students in the MA Program? Full-time graduate students may be eligible for some financial aid and/or work-study jobs from the College, New York State or other sources. Part-time students usually have fewer financial aid options. All students in need of financial aid should stop by the Hunter College Office of Administrative and Information Services (OASIS) located in 217 Hunter North Building or visit the Office of Financial Aid website.

The Foundation Center is a specialized library and resource center which may provide leads to information about grants for study and research. It is located at 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003. Tel: (212) 620-4230(212) 620-4230.

The Hunter College Anthropology Department may provide small tuition scholarships. Each year it also provides small grants on a competitive basis to assist students in their training or their master's thesis research.

If I study part-time, how long do I have to complete the degree? MA candidates normally complete the program in two years if there are no interruptions in their studies. The maximum time allowed for completing all degree requirements from the time of matriculation is four years. Students who exceed this limit must fill out a time extension form, which must be signed and stamped by the Graduate Advisor and approved by the Dean.

I work full-time and have a family. Is it still possible for me to enter and finish the Program? Many MA Program students have significant work and family responsibilities. All MA-level courses are held in the evening in order to make it possible for students who work to attend. Students with full-time jobs and/or family obligations may find that they have to study part-time, but they can still successfully complete the program.

I need to interrupt my studies for a while in order to attend to other business. What should I do? The College requires that you submit a leave of absence petition if you plan to take a semester

or more off from your studies. For a leave of absence form, see:

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/onestop/repository/files/registrar/leaveofabsence_grad_reg.pdf

How should I choose what courses to take? The four required courses are offered each year and it is generally a good idea to complete them early in your course of study. Some special topic courses are offered only every few years or on a one-time basis. If there is a special topic course that greatly interests you, it is probably a good idea to take it, since it may not be offered again for some time. Towards the end of your course of study, you may wish to register for an independent study course or the thesis research course. Both of these courses require that you reach an agreement with a faculty supervisor about the work to be completed for the course. Students should decide which courses to take in consultation with the Graduate Advisor and other faculty members.

What is the procedure for obtaining approval and registering for courses? All students must obtain approval from the graduate advisor to take MA-level anthropology courses. Once the appropriate approval codes are entered in the central CUNY computer, students may register by telephone, following the instructions provided by OASIS.

May I request course approvals from the Graduate Advisor by telephone? It is recommended that students seeking course approvals submit their requests only in writing. This can be in the form of an e-mail message. Such requests must include the student's full name, ID number ("EMPL ID"), and the title, number and code for each course. Please do not leave telephone messages, since these are frequently incomplete and/or difficult to understand.

Can I take courses outside of Hunter and receive credit towards my Hunter MA? Students may receive **up to six transfer credits towards the MA degree for courses taken at other institutions.** Students may take courses outside the Department and College but may not transfer more than 6 credits (including any transfer credits) and must seek approval for such courses before enrolling in them. Such requests should include syllabi, catalog description, a transcript of grades, and a sample paper or other work for each course.

Students who wish to take courses at other CUNY campuses must request an e-permit from OASIS. The permit has to be approved by the department chair and by the appropriate official at the other CUNY campus.

Can I take courses during the summer? The MA Program only rarely offers courses during the summer. Some students receive credit during the summer, however, for participation in field schools or, less commonly, for independent study or thesis research courses. These require that a faculty supervisor is available during the summer and willing to supervise the course.

What is the required foreign language test? The language examination is intended to assure that master's degree candidates have a reading knowledge of a language other than English which is sufficient for them to use that language in scholarly work. This means that the candidate should be able to read the language easily, with only minor reliance on a dictionary, and should be able to translate academic prose into idiomatic (not necessarily literal) English. A candidate may request an examination in a language that has a significant scholarly literature or that would be useful in his/her field research.

The examination usually requires the student to translate approximately one printed page into English. The student may use a paper dictionary, but electric dictionaries are not allowed. The

student should strive for a fluid translation; it should be publishable prose in English. A student should not take the language examination until he/she is very confident of passing. The CUNY Graduate Center offers foreign language reading courses (non-credit) for students who wish to brush up on or learn a language.

A native speaker of a language other than English is not exempt from the requirement, since he/she must also demonstrate a high level of competence in translating the language into English. The Department will only waive the language examination under very unusual circumstances; a student who is a native speaker and who has documentation of significant post-secondary education in the language may apply for a waiver. Even in such cases, however, waiver applications are not granted automatically.

Language examinations are given once every semester. Students are responsible for promptly responding to the e-mail from the graduate advisor who will solicit requests for language exams.

What kind of statistics course may I take in lieu of the foreign language requirement? Students who wish to demonstrate competence in quantitative methods in lieu of knowledge of a foreign language may take a statistics or analytical methods course, with prior approval of the Anthropology Graduate Advisor.

What kind of research opportunities are available to students in the MA Program? MA Program students frequently participate in summer field schools and faculty research projects. Many also develop their own projects as part of their master's thesis research.

Who will be my thesis advisor in the Program? While the Graduate Advisor may provide advice about curricular matters, students with concerns about their areas of specialization should consult with other faculty members expert in those areas. All students also have to select a thesis advisor for their master's thesis, preferably one who is knowledgeable about the topic of their research. Only full-time permanent faculty can act as thesis advisors. It is important to take courses and work closely with the faculty member you wish to be your advisor. Faculty may be reluctant to take on the time-consuming role of supervising a thesis unless they have some prior experience with the student.

What are "office hours" and how do I find out when a particular professor has office hours? Office hours are blocks of time that faculty members reserve for one-on-one or small group conversations with students. It is important that students speak with faculty members outside of class and office hours are a good time to do this. Most professors post their current office hours on their Hunter websites. Please check the website of a faculty member with whom you wish to speak for this information before you email or call her or him. Email or call only if the information on the website is not current. And remember that faculty members are usually pleased to make an appointment with you if their office hours are at a time when you are unable to meet.

When should I start thinking about a master's thesis topic? How do I choose a topic and an advisor for my master's thesis? A master's thesis is a significant undertaking, but it is not generally as extensive as a doctoral dissertation. You should always be thinking about, making lists of, and collecting material on topics that you find intellectually exciting. You should try to frame an appropriate thesis topic, in consultation with one or more faculty members, at least one semester (and preferably more) before you intend to graduate.

What kinds of courses and other work are necessary for completing a good master's thesis? A

thesis is supposed to be based on original research. It is usually a good idea to be familiar with appropriate research methods and research design skills for the issue on which you intend to work. This background could be obtained through taking a research methods course or other similar training. Please consult the Guidelines for the Preparation of the Master's Thesis in this Handbook.

What is Anthropology 706, the Master's Thesis Seminar, and when do I have to take it? ANTH 706 is an independent study course that you take with your thesis advisor. It is not a seminar in the usual sense of the word, with a single instructor and regular meetings for all enrolled students. ANTH 706 is not a required course; it simply allows students to obtain three credits towards the MA for researching and writing the thesis. If you do decide to take ANTH 706, you should only do so if you are confident that you will finish the thesis in the semester you register for it. Otherwise you will receive an incomplete. There are other independent study courses (ANTH 785 and 786) that you may also take with your advisor (or another faculty member) and use to pursue your thesis research or another topic that interests you. The advantage of these courses over 706 is that the final product could be a thesis chapter or some other product that your advisor and you agree on. All of these independent study courses require approval from the Graduate Advisor and from the faculty member supervising the course.

I've finished all my course work, but not my thesis. Do I still have to register? If you are not registered for any courses but are completing other degree requirements, you must register to maintain matriculation (and must pay a Maintenance of Matriculation fee). A student must be registered for the semester of graduation but need not register for any semester during which no work is done toward graduation. The student must submit a Maintenance of Matriculation form. For the filing process and the fee, see: [http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/onestop/repository/files/registrar/MAM - revised fees as of Fall 2015 for One Stop.pdf](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/onestop/repository/files/registrar/MAM-revised_fees_as_of_Fall_2015_for_One_Stop.pdf)

What kind of careers are available to people with a MA degree in anthropology? The American Anthropological Association home page has a wide variety of information on careers. See also the Careers in Anthropology page for additional links.

Will the MA Program at Hunter prepare me for entering a PhD program in anthropology? The Hunter College MA Program provides solid training for students who intend to enter doctoral programs. Our graduates have an excellent record of obtaining admission and fellowships at top programs.

Can I go directly from the Hunter College MA Program to the PhD Program in Anthropology at the CUNY Graduate Center? Many MA Program students hope to continue their training in the PhD Program in Anthropology at the CUNY Graduate Center. This is not automatic, however. The PhD Program has a separate admissions committee and different admissions criteria. In recent years, many, but not all, applicants with Hunter MA degrees have been accepted by the PhD Program.