

Chapter 1. Admission to the Graduate Program

The Department of Anthropology welcomes applications from individuals with diverse backgrounds from throughout the world. The main purpose of the graduate program in anthropology is to prepare students for a position as a college/university-level researcher and/or teacher, or for an advanced nonacademic research position. Nonetheless, a small number of students are admitted each year who wish only a master's degree in sociocultural anthropology, archaeology, or biological anthropology or to be admitted to the Cultural Heritage Studies master's program. Students interested in the PhD track enter directly into the PhD degree program, though they have the option of earning an MA as described below. This latter option provides the flexibility to pursue both the master's and the PhD degrees or only the master's degree should you not be able to complete the PhD program. Students in the Cultural Heritage Studies concentration and the Master of Arts option are admitted with the understanding that these are terminal master's degrees; if you enter either program and wish to continue on in the PhD program, you must apply for admission to the PhD program. Students in the Master of Arts option and Cultural Heritage Studies concentration have fewer funding opportunities than do students in good standing in PhD tracks.

All applicants should state their subfield preference (archaeology, biological anthropology, Cultural Heritage Studies, sociocultural anthropology) when applying for admission to the graduate program. The admissions deadline to the graduate program in the Department of Anthropology is **DECEMBER 1**. Graduate students may change their subfield concentration during their graduate career, although this may mean starting over in your training.

New graduate students normally enter the program in fall semester.

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B. Is this the right graduate program for you?

Since graduate students in anthropology across the country spend an average of five to eight years in graduate studies before they receive their PhD degree, it's important to carefully choose the graduate program you enter. The program you choose should have faculty with expertise in the area (both theoretical and geographical) in which you intend to concentrate. Whether our graduate program is the right graduate program for you depends, then, on the match between your interests and ours. One way to assess the match is to read through the individual faculty profiles in the [Anthropology Faculty](http://anthropology.umn.edu/people/faculty.php) listing on the department's web site (<http://anthropology.umn.edu/people/faculty.php>). You may find the following descriptions of current subfield specialties useful, too:

Sociocultural Anthropology. Regional specialization in sociocultural anthropology includes Europe, Latin America, the Pacific, North America, Russia, and South Asia. Areas of faculty research and graduate student training include:

*colonial and post-colonial studies material practice
consumption and work medical anthropology
cultures of capitalism modernity
cultural economics nationalism and national identities
cultural histories of healing personality and culture
cultural studies of science political economy
dialogics of culture politics and law
economic anthropology politics of memory
embodiment race and popular culture
ethnographies of the state time and culture
ethnohistory socialism/post-socialism
gender/sexuality tourism
globalization urban anthropology
history and memory*

Archaeology and Biological Anthropology. Regional specialization in archaeology and biological anthropology includes Africa, Eastern and Western Europe, West Asia, and North America. The faculty is particularly well-known for current and emerging work in areas including:

*anthropology/biology of hunter-gatherers faunal analysis
historical archaeology material culture studies
Western Great Lakes archaeology human evolution
European Iron Age/Roman studies stone tool (lithic) analysis
evolutionary theory*

Cultural Heritage Studies. Although the Cultural Heritage Studies master's program concentrates on examples drawn from North America in its basic courses, its students are interested in and engaged in a broad range of global problems, such as the conservation of world heritage sites and the fundamental role of national cultures in local cultural heritage programs.

Master of Arts Degree. As emphasized above, the main focus of the department's graduate program is the PhD track. However, a master's degree is sufficient for many careers and personal objectives. For instance, the Cultural Heritage Studies program trains students interested in meeting a federal standard for eligibility as a principal investigator for contracts where federal money is involved – which is a master's degree in an appropriate field. Other students would like a master's degree in anthropology to supplement training in other fields. We recognize these and other aims as legitimate goals in applying to our graduate program. However, because of limited resources, Master of Arts degree graduate students have a low priority in the distributions of funds and teaching assistantships. Cultural Heritage Studies graduate students are expected to seek professional employment outside the University – and thus also have a low priority in the distribution of our limited financial resources.

Another important consideration in choosing a graduate program is the diversity, focus, and prominence of other departments and programs at a university or college that would enrich your education as a graduate student in anthropology. As one of the leading research universities in the country, the University of Minnesota is a complex web of interlocked departments and programs, both in the humanities-social sciences and in the natural sciences, and also in engineering and the medical sciences. Is there a good match between your interests and one or more of these webs of interlocking departments and programs? Browse through the [Graduate Programs and Program Profiles](#) section of the [Graduate School](#) Web site to find out. If you are still not sure if the support system you are looking for is present, contact the director of graduate studies or one or more of the faculty with interests close to yours – and ask.

Because anthropology concerns the study of cultures around the world, the faculty maintain close ties with many other units at Minnesota, including area and thematic studies centers, such as the departments of [African American and African Studies](#) , [Geography](#) , [History](#) , and [American Indian Studies](#) , the centers for [Austrian Studies](#) , [Chicano Studies](#) , [China Studies](#) , [German and European Studies](#) , [Immigrant History Research](#) , and [Scandinavian Studies](#) , and the [Institute for Global Studies](#) . In addition, the research interests of the faculty have led to links with the [Medical School](#) , the [Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior](#) , and the [Jane Goodall Institute Center for Primate Studies](#) , among other units.

A major first-step before you begin applying to graduate programs is to work your way through the process described above. Although we believe we have a stimulating graduate program with outstanding students, the program will not – and cannot – satisfy the interests of everyone in the process of choosing a graduate program. If you find that we do have matching interests – read on.

C. Undergraduate preparation

Students applying for admission to the PhD graduate program in Anthropology should have at least a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) in their last two years of undergraduate work, and preferably a GPA of 3.3 or above. Stated more generally, students are admitted on the basis of quality of academic preparation.

Students applying for admission to the Cultural Heritage Studies or Master of Arts graduate programs should have at least a 3.0 grade point average in their last two years of undergraduate work. For the Cultural Heritage Studies program, students with a background in anthropology or archaeology are preferred because of the two-year nature of the program and the demanding final oral examination. Likewise, students with field and/or laboratory experience are preferred because of the nature of the competencies that structure the program. Nonetheless, all applicants to the Cultural Heritage Studies program are considered and students with little or no background in anthropology or archaeology are accepted depending on interest and training. These students may be required to make up specified deficiencies during their program.

Note: Admission to all graduate programs within the Department of Anthropology is competitive. Typically, only a small percentage of applicants are admitted to the graduate program each year, with a few more placed on a waiting list. In general, about two students in each track (PhD track in archaeology, biological anthropology, and sociocultural anthropology; Cultural Heritage Studies; Master of Arts) actually enter the program each year, for a total of about 6-10 new students. A relatively high GPA, then, does not ensure acceptance into a track in the graduate program.

If you are concerned about the adequacy of your background preparation for our graduate program, contact the director of graduate studies Jean Langford, langf001@umn.edu, 612-625-4092. Additional questions can be answered by the Department of Anthropology office at 612-625-3400, or to the departmental administrator at nast0002@umn.edu.

D. The role and value of diversity in the graduate program

As the educational and main research arm of a discipline that studies peoples and cultures throughout the world, departments of anthropology value diversity in their graduate student body. Beyond our Department of Anthropology, however, the University of Minnesota has made an educational judgment that promoting and supporting diversity among the student body is central to the academic mission of the institution; this judgment is firmly supported by the [Mission Statement](#) and [Equal Opportunity](#) policies adopted by the Board of Regents. In these policies, diversity is defined broadly to include (but not to be limited by) such factors as:

race positions of leadership
ethnicity record of community or public service
geographic diversity special extracurricular involvement
economic disadvantage participation in college preparatory programs
gender and sexual orientation ability in multiple languages
first generation college special talents
documented disability extensive travel/work abroad
overcoming personal/family adversity disadvantaged or challenging educational background
strong work record age

Although the Department of Anthropology uses a single-track admissions system where all applicants compete against one another for the available slots, diversity is an important consideration. When applying to our graduate program, you should clearly point out, if appropriate, your potential contribution to the diversity of our graduate student body.

E. How to apply to the graduate program

With the exception of the **Writing Sample** (*see below*), you must apply to the program through the Graduate School's online application process at **ApplyYourself**:

http://www.grad.umn.edu/prospective_students/apply_online.html . Through this site, you will be able to input and upload all the required documents for your application. You should also read the Graduate School's information for prospective students at: http://www.grad.umn.edu/prospective_students/ .

Two pieces of the application process deserve special mention:

Statement of Purpose: Write a statement of purpose that describes your interests and professional goals and upload it into the "personal statement" field on the **ApplyYourself** website. While the **ApplyYourself** site refers to this as a "personal statement," it should be more accurately thought of as a statement of your intellectual, learning, and career goals, and how you think that the Department of Anthropology at Minnesota will provide focus and instruction toward your goals. Since faculty members evaluating your application place **great** importance on this statement, it should be very carefully crafted. You are limited to 4,000 characters, so each word should count. This is also an appropriate place in your application "portfolio" to provide, if appropriate, a statement explaining your potential contribution to the diversity of the graduate student body

Writing Sample: If you intend to study within the sociocultural branch of the program, submit a writing sample that is **no more** than 20 double-spaced pages in length. An undergraduate research paper, a chapter from a senior or master's thesis, or a published article would be appropriate, though the paper does not have to be anthropological in nature. Ideally, the paper should reflect your abilities to think critically and to articulate ideas. Applications for admission to the sociocultural branch of the graduate program that do not include a writing sample will be summarily rejected by the department. Candidates for the biological or archaeological programs are not required to submit a writing sample, but it is encouraged.

The writing sample needs to be **submitted directly to the Department of Anthropology**. You may submit an electronic copy to the departmental administrator at nast0002@umn.edu. You may also submit the sample by mail:

Graduate Application
Department of Anthropology
University of Minnesota
301 19th Ave S
395 HHH Center
Minneapolis MN 55455

Application Deadline: The deadline for fall semester admission is **DECEMBER 1** for those students seeking financial support. While the Graduate School's deadline is June 15th, departmental funding decisions must be made between the end of December to the beginning of January. This makes the **DECEMBER 1st DEADLINE** essential for proper application processing and departmental review as well as eligibility for funding. Late applicants will not receive consideration for funding.

*****IMPORTANT NOTE***** *The completion and submission of all application materials is the sole responsibility of the applicant..* You can monitor your Graduate School application materials online at <https://app.applyyourself.com/?id=UMTC-GRAD> .

GRE : The department accepts the results of Graduate Record Examinations taken within the last eight years. For further information on the GRE, see <http://www.ets.org> .

The GRE Institution Code is **6874**.

The GRE Department Code is **1701** – Anthropology.

F. Special instructions for international students

How to apply to the graduate program: You must complete the application online at:

http://www.grad.umn.edu/prospective_students/apply_online.html . The application fee for international applicants is \$75 and must be paid by credit card. **Note:** All international applicants must complete and return the **International Student Financial Certification Statement (PDF) BEFORE visa forms will be issued. This form is used to prove that you have sufficient funds for all educational and living expenses for 12 months. For the school**

year 2006-2007, the educational expenses including all required fees is at \$23,458, living expenses including book expenses is \$14,400. The minimum total amount students must indicate as available funds on the financial certification form is \$37,858. Any offer of funding from the department or Graduate School (tuition and stipend) can be counted toward this total. Please see the form for additional expenses for summer school and dependents.

For answers to frequently asked questions regarding the application process for international students, http://www.grad.umn.edu/prospective_students/international/faq.html . The ISSS Student Handbook has information to help you understand and adjust to life at the University of Minnesota and the U.S., <http://www.iss.umn.edu/new/HandBook/HandBook.html> .

The Graduate School English language requirements: The Graduate School standard for English language proficiency for international students is a computer TOEFL score of 213 (550 on the paper-based test), or a MELAB score of 80, or an IELTS score of 6.5, but a number of programs have higher minimums. More information is available, please follow this link:

http://www.grad.umn.edu/prospective_students/Application_Information/TOEFL.html

The Department of Anthropology accepts the Graduate School's operational standard for admission of a score of at least 550 on the TOEFL (or 213 on the computer-based TOEFL test taken after June 1998), 80 on the MELAB, or 6.5 on the IELTS. Again, note that the TOEFL, MELAB, or IELTS is required of all international applicants whose native language is not English, **except** those who will have completed 24 quarter credits/16 semester credits (within the last 24 months) in residence as a full time student at a recognized institution of higher learning in the United States before entering the University of Minnesota. The Graduate School does not waive this requirement.

G. Special instructions for non-degree students

Individuals interested in taking graduate-level courses in anthropology as a non-degree-seeking student can earn graduate credit through the Professional Development Program www.comm.umn.edu/nondegree.pdf . For registration information, eligibility criteria, a "quick guide" to registering, registration options, and a registration form please follow this link <http://www.onestop.umn.edu/onestop/Registration/nondegree.html> . You can also review the Graduate School's web site at http://www.grad.umn.edu/prospective_students/grad_nondegree.html .

You should generally talk with the course instructor and/or the director of graduate studies before filling out the registration form. Although the department encourages the registration of non-degree-seeking students in its graduate courses, it is important that individuals determine before they apply whether they have the background necessary to successfully complete the graduate-level courses.

Note: You need departmental approval to take graduate-level courses in anthropology. Non-degree seeking students are not eligible for financial aid from the department and Graduate School. Departmental approval in anthropology requires approval from both the course instructor and the director of graduate studies.

H. Special instructions for students seeking Change of Status or Readmission to the program

Students who are seeking readmission or a change of status within the Graduate School should follow this link for more information: http://www.grad.umn.edu/current_students/registration/readmission.html

Application Fee: A \$55 Change of Status/Readmission application fee paid by credit card must accompany each application for Change of Status or Readmission. You must apply for Change of Status/Readmission through the Graduate School's *Apply Yourself* online application process at: <https://app.applyyourself.com/?id=UMTC-COS> .

Readmission to the Program. Previously registered graduate students in the Department of Anthropology who are

considered “withdrawn” by the Graduate School must apply for readmission to the Graduate School and to the program. Successful readmission into the program requires the support of your adviser and the director of graduate studies – and it is not automatic. Special readmission requirements may be imposed on students with multiple incompletes and/or who are not making acceptable progress in their degree program. In some cases, readmission may be denied.

Change of Major or Degree Objective. Students currently enrolled in the Graduate School who intend to change their major or degree objective from that originally approved by the Graduate School must request a change of status. Likewise, students who have already been awarded a degree in the Graduate School must request a change of status if they wish to pursue another degree in anthropology. A change of status request is necessary for students enrolled in the PhD degree option in the program who decide to file for a MA degree after completing their preliminary written and oral exams. All requests are treated as new applications by the Graduate Committee and are subject to the eligibility criteria for admission to the program. A change of major or degree objective is not automatically granted, except for those students opting to file for a MA degree after completing their preliminary written and oral examinations and who, after receiving the MA degree, wish to continue in their PhD program.

I. Financial aid for entering graduate students

For incoming graduate students, funding is normally provided through Teaching Assistantships, Graduate School Fellowships, and other fellowships available from the Graduate School (*see below*). During the admission process, the graduate committee makes nominations to the Graduate School for Graduate Fellowships, MacArthur Scholars Fellowships, and the DOVE (Diversity of Views and Experiences) Fellowships based on the applicants’ file. In addition, the committee also makes decisions on candidates who will be offered Departmental Fellowships (or Teaching Assistantships). Whatever funding a successful applicant is offered, the department usually guarantees a total of three years of funding for all fully funded Ph.D. candidates.

Students are encouraged to apply for financial support outside the department. Fellowships are available for under-represented and educationally disadvantaged students, for students with a diversity of views and experiences, and for other student backgrounds. Contact the *Office of Graduate School Outreach* for information <http://www.grad.umn.edu/outreach/> . Other avenues of financial assistance include student employment and various loan programs that are based on financial need. Please view one of the following links for additional financial aid information: <http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/gen/assist.html> , http://www.grad.umn.edu/current_students/funding/ and <http://www.grad.umn.edu/outreach/finances/fellowships.html> .

Graduate School Fellowships. Intended for recruiting outstanding new students to the University’s graduate programs, these fellowships provide approximately \$17,500 for the academic year plus tuition for up to 14 credits per term and subsidized health insurance. The department also guarantees winners of a Graduate School Fellowship at least two additional years of financial support. Nominees are chosen by the department for an all-university competition. In general, nominees must have a GPA of 3.6 or above, very strong GRE scores, strong recommendations, and a background well-suited to graduate-level studies in anthropology.

Graduate Assistantships: Graduate assistantships are academic appointments reserved for graduate and professional students. Appointments to teaching assistant, research assistant, or administrative fellow positions are offered through various departments. A teaching assistant helps teach students in a specified course or courses under the general supervision of the academic staff and may be assigned primary responsibility for an entire course. A research assistant carries out activities connected with research studies assigned by the supporting department or principal research investigator. An administrative fellow performs duties of a specialized nature connected with academic administration. *To be eligible to hold one of these appointments, a student must have been admitted to the Graduate School or a professional school and be registered in the Graduate School or professional school each term of the appointment; this applies to appointments of any percentage or any number of hours.*

Benefits—All graduate assistants holding appointments as teaching assistants, research assistants, and administrative fellows may become eligible for the following benefits: Tuition Benefit, Resident Rate Privilege, and Extended Resident Rate Privileges.

Other Financial Opportunities:

Diversity of Views and Experiences Fellowship (DOVE). Dove Fellowships are for entering graduate students with a diversity of views and/or experiences. The fellowship provides a stipend of approximately \$21,000 plus tuition (up to 14 credits per semester) and subsidized health insurance for one academic year. The department also guarantees winners of a Dove Fellowship at least two additional years of financial support. If you are interested in being nominated for a DOVE Fellowship, please email your interest to the graduate secretary at liebe006@umn.edu. For a list of frequently asked questions, please follow this link: http://www.grad.umn.edu/outreach/finances/dove_faq.html.

MacArthur Scholars Fellowships. A fellowship for students interested in the Global South. The fellowship provides financial support for students who are clearly committed to the interdisciplinary study of developing nations in the context of global change. Nominations of students from developing nations and members of American minority groups are encouraged. The fellowship carries a first-year stipend of approximately \$15,000; it also provides some dissertation-year support depending on availability of funds and student progress in program. The department guarantees winners of a MacArthur Scholars Fellowship at least two additional years of financial support. If you are interested in being nominated for a DOVE Fellowship, please email your interest to the graduate secretary at liebe006@umn.edu. For more information on this fellowship, please follow this link: <http://www.icgc.umn.edu/fellowships/index.html>.

ISSS Financial Aid Program for Foreign Students: In an effort to assist international students who are experiencing financial hardship due to unforeseen circumstances, ISSS offers a very limited amount of financial aid to international students at the U of MN-Twin Cities campus. For information and forms, please follow this link: <http://www.iss.umn.edu/programs/fa/default.html>.

Students who are admitted to the graduate program without financial aid and/or need additional financial aid should check out Federal student aid (FAFSA) and other grant (loan) opportunities at the *Office of Student Finance*. For financial aid in general, go to <http://www.onestop.umn.edu/onestop/financialaid.html>

J. Earning a minor in anthropology

The minor program in anthropology is individually designed by each student in consultation with a faculty adviser at both the master's and PhD level. Consult the director of graduate studies about selecting an adviser. At the master's level, you must take a minimum of 6 graduate-credits in anthropology. At the PhD level, a minimum of 12 graduate-level credits in anthropology must be completed for the minor, at least one of which is at the 8000-level. Course choices are subject to the approval of the director of graduate studies.

K. Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

The Graduate School web site contains sets of "Frequently Asked Questions" for the application process http://www.grad.umn.edu/frequently_asked_questions.html. You should read through these sets of questions before you begin the application process and, if accepted into the program, the registration process.

Other frequently asked questions include:

When do I hear whether I am accepted into the program and if I will be offered financial aid?

Students who are accepted into the graduate program are usually contacted by the department by late January. Those who are not will receive a letter from the department to that effect in early February. If you have been nominated for a fellowship, the results of the competition are usually not known until mid-March.

Do I get credit for prior graduate work when I enter the graduate program in the Department of Anthropology?

Some students may have earned graduate-level credits in anthropology as an undergraduate or as a non-degree student before they are admitted to the graduate program. The University of Minnesota has detailed criteria for the

transfer of credits for both the master's degree and the PhD degree:

<http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/gen/masters.html> or <http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/gen/phd.html> .

In general, however, official transcripts of the graded work must be submitted, the coursework must be at the graduate level, the course taught by faculty authorized to teach graduate courses, and the graduate credit earned after you received your undergraduate degree. At the PhD level, the number of credits accepted for transfer is determined by the Graduate Committee, while at the MA level, the transfer of up to 40 percent of the degree program coursework is allowed under specific conditions laid out in the Graduate School Catalog.

What if my application is incomplete by the DECEMBER 1st deadline?

The Department's deadline for financial funding is DECEMBER 1st. If you cannot complete your application by this deadline due to extenuating circumstances and/or can present a compelling case, please contact the departmental administrator, nast0002@umn.edu. Please remember the Graduate Committee's recommendations are based on your complete application.

Can I stop in and look the department over before I make my mind up about which graduate school to attend?

At The University of Minnesota, we encourage applicants to visit our department. If you decide to visit, contact the associate director of graduate studies **Jean Langford**, langf001@umn.edu, 612-625-4092 and also the faculty member (s) you have been corresponding with so an appropriate day can be arranged. Before you come, prepare questions – and when you do come make sure you have time to talk with some of the graduate students to get some understanding of their view of the department. Students offered a fellowship get some funds toward a visit.

How do I find a place to live?

For information on your housing options, visit the Housing & Residential Life web site at

<http://www.housing.umn.edu/> . For information on University family housing, contact Commonwealth Terrace

Cooperative, 1250 Fifield Avenue, St. Paul, MN, 55108 (651-646-7526) or Como Student Community, 1024 27th Avenue S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55414 (612-378-2434). Your fellow graduate students are generally also a good source of information about where to live, how to find housing, and so forth.

How do I know which courses to sign up for my first semester?

In general, first-year graduate students are expected to take courses suggested by their first-year (temporary) adviser, who is assigned to you when you are accepted into the program, and one or more designated seminars. Before the fall semester starts, read the description of first-year activities in your degree program (sociocultural, archaeology, biological anthropology, Cultural Heritage Studies) and then contact your first-year adviser and work out a plan of study for your first year (see the First-Year Plan of Study form, which is discussed in the description of each subfield in this handbook). If still not certain about how to proceed, contact the director of graduate studies **Jean Langford**, langf001@umn.edu, 612-625-4092.

Can I register late?

Information on late registration can be found at:

http://www.grad.umn.edu/current_students/registration/exceptions.html

After reviewing all of this information if you still have questions, contact **Jean Langford**, langf001@umn.edu, 612-625-4092 or the departmental administrator at nast0002@umn.edu, 612-625-3400.