

# ANTHROPOLOGY, B.A.

**Begin Campus:** Any Penn State Campus

**End Campus:** University Park

## Program Description

Anthropology is a holistic scientific discipline having links to the humanities. Anthropologists document, describe, and explain the physical and cultural differences of societies, both past and present. Anthropology sees the individual as part of a larger social order that both impinges upon and is molded by those who belong to it. Anthropology investigates how cultures interact and relate within specific economic, political, and ecological frameworks over time.

The Bachelor of Arts major focuses on the biological and cultural variations of human populations through archaeology, biological anthropology, and cultural anthropology. In addition to class work, students receive practical training in laboratory and field work.

## What is Anthropology?

Anthropology is the study of human diversity – our biology, behavior, cultural complexity, and evolution. Anthropologists study living people across cultures and populations; past people through the fossil, archaeological, and historical records; as well as living and extinct nonhuman primates. Anthropologists document, describe, and seek to understand biological and cultural variation in humans both past and present as a way to understand and explain the human condition. The field is divided into several integrated areas of study. Archaeology focuses on past societies, both ancient and historic, in order to understand and explain culture change over time. Biological Anthropology describes and explains human biological variation today and in the past. Human Ecology or Cultural Anthropology studies contemporary societies and cultures and their interactions with the environment.

## You Might Like This Program If...

- You are interested in human cultural and biological variation and you want to understand human behavior and biology.
- You find human diversity fascinating and want to explore and understand the human condition.
- You want to study important questions such as ‘what makes us human?’ and ‘what is the origin and importance of human diversity?’
- You want to pursue a career in anthropological research, museum curation, education, health professions, law, non-governmental organizations, or international relations.

## Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

## Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	18
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	37

**4 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes 4 credits of General Education GQ courses.**

**3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and 0-12 credits are included in Electives if world language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.**

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of coursework in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

## Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>).

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
ANTH 2N	World Archaeology	3
ANTH 21	Introductory Biological Anthropology	3
ANTH 45N	Cultural Diversity: A Global Perspective	3
STAT 200	Elementary Statistics	4
<b>Additional Courses</b>		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
<i>Area/Survey Courses</i>		
Select 6 credits in ANTH courses at the 200 level or below (excluding ANTH 1, ANTH 83S, and courses in the following ranges: 190-199, 290-299, other than 297)		6
<i>Methods Courses</i>		
Select 6 credits of Methods courses from:		6
ANTH 321W	Intellectual Background of Archaeology	
ANTH 380	Anthropology Museum Studies	
ANTH 410	Osteology	
ANTH 411	Skeletal Forensic Anthropology	
ANTH 425	Zooarchaeology	
ANTH 426W	Archaeological Laboratory Analysis	
ANTH 427W	Forensic Archaeology	
ANTH 428	Archaeological Methods and Theory	
ANTH 432	Environmental Archaeology	

ANTH 458	Ethnographic Field Methods	
ANTH 492	Intermediate Field Methods	
ANTH 493	Field Techniques	
<i>Advanced Theory and Method Courses</i>		
Select 12 credits from the following ranges (at least 3 credits must be in each range):		12
Archaeology: ANTH 420-439		
Biological anthropology: ANTH 400-419, ANTH 460-473		
Human Ecology/Cultural anthropology: ANTH 440-459, ANTH 474-479		

## General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

### Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

### Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

### Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

### Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

## University Degree Requirements

### First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

### Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

### Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

### Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

### Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

### Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

## B.A. Degree Requirements

**World Language** (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one world language in addition to English. This proficiency must be demonstrated by either examination or course work. See the Placement Policy for Penn State World Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

**B.A. Fields** (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, World Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; world language credits in this category must be in a second world language in addition to English or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language). Credits must be selected from the list of approved courses.

**World Cultures** (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the University Cultural Diversity (US/IL) requirement.

## Integrated B.A. degree in Anthropology and M.A. degree in Anthropology

*Undergraduate degree available at the following campuses: University Park*

**Graduate degree available at the following campuses: University Park**

Requirements for the Integrated B.A. degree in Anthropology and M.A. degree in Anthropology can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/anthropology/#integratedundergradprogramstext>).

## Integrated B.A. degree in Anthropology or B.S. degree in Anthropological Science, B.A. degree in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies (CAMS), and M.A. degree in Anthropology

**Undergraduate degree available at the following campuses: University Park**

**Graduate degree available at the following campuses: University Park**

Requirements for the Integrated B.A. degree in Anthropology or B.S. degree in Anthropological Science, B.A. degree in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies (CAMS), and M.A. degree in Anthropology can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/anthropology/#integratedundergradprogramstext>).

## Program Learning Objectives

- **Content:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of the major concepts and theories of anthropology (archaeological, biological, cultural) and an understanding of human diversity, variation, and adaptation from cultural, biological, and historical perspectives.
- **Integrated Anthropological Inquiry:** Students will demonstrate informed knowledge of other cultures and diverse ways of life, both past and present, and an understanding of how diverse lines of anthropological inquiry can be integrated to understand the human condition.
- **Critical and Synthetic Thinking:** Students will 1) demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking and the scientific approach to solve problems related to biological and cultural variation, 2) demonstrate critical thinking in the analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of information from the scientific literature, and 3) demonstrate the ability to synthesize and integrate information and findings from diverse sources.
- **Effective Communication:** Students will demonstrate an ability to communicate core concepts of anthropological science effectively in both written and oral formats.
- **Methods and Research Skills:** Students will 1) demonstrate an understanding of current anthropological field and laboratory research methods and how these methods can be used to test hypotheses related to past and present human variation and adaptation in both cultural and biological contexts and 2) demonstrate an ability to analyze and interpret quantitative anthropological data based on statistics, graphs, and data tables.

## Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

### University Park

**Liberal Arts Academic Advising**

814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

## Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2025-26 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

### Anthropology, B.A. at University Park Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year		
Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ANTH 2N*	3 ANTH 21*	3
ANTH 45N or 21*	3 World Language Level 2	4
LA 83	1.5 General Education Course (GQ) <sup>†</sup>	3
World Language Level 1	4 General Education Course	3
General Education Course (GWS) <sup>‡</sup>	3 General Education Course (GWS) <sup>‡</sup>	3
General Education Course or First-Year Seminar	3	
	<b>17.5</b>	<b>16</b>
Second Year		
Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ANTH Survey Course (200-Level and Below)*	3 ANTH Survey Course (200-Level and Below)*	3
World Language Level 3	4 LA 283	1.5
General Education Course	3 STAT 200 (GQ) <sup>*††</sup>	4
General Education Course	3 ANTH Methods Course <sup>*1</sup>	3
Elective	3 General Education Course	3
	Elective	3
	<b>16</b>	<b>17.5</b>

**Third Year**

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ANTH Methods Course (ANTH 426W or ANTH 427W)* <sup>1</sup>	3 ANTH (400-Level)*	3
ANTH (400-Level)*	3 BA Fields	3
General Education Course (GWS) <sup>‡</sup>	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

**Fourth Year**

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ANTH (400-Level)*	3 ANTH (400-Level)*	3
BA Fields	3 BA Fields	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course (GHW)	1.5
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective/World Cultures	3
	<b>13.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>

**Total Credits 124**

\* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

<sup>1</sup> Methods Courses: ANTH 321W, ANTH 380, ANTH 410, ANTH 411, ANTH 425, ANTH 426W, ANTH 427W, ANTH 428, ANTH 432, ANTH 458, ANTH 492, ANTH 493

\*\*Please note: to fulfill the Writing Across the Curriculum requirement, choose one of the listed W courses.

**University Requirements and General Education Notes:**

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

**Bachelor of Arts Requirements:**

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in World Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as World Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-cultures/>).

**Advising Notes:**

- 24 credits within the major must be completed at University Park (policy 83-80). Talk with your academic adviser for additional details.
- All students must take an LA First Year Seminar that will also count as General Education.

## Anthropology, B.A. at Commonwealth Campuses

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

### First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ANTH 45N or 21*	3 ANTH 45N or 21*	3
World Language Level 1	4 World Language Level 2	4
ANTH 2N*	3 General Education Course (GQ)‡	3
General Education Course (GWS)‡	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course or First-Year Seminar	3 General Education Course (GWS)‡	3
<b>16</b>		<b>16</b>

### Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ANTH Survey Course (200-Level and Below)*	3 ANTH Survey Course (200-Level and Below)*	3
World Language Level 3	4 STAT 200 (GQ)*††	4
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
<b>16</b>		<b>16</b>

### Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ANTH Methods Course (ANTH 426W or ANTH 427W)* <sup>1</sup>	3 ANTH Methods Course* <sup>1</sup>	3
ANTH (400-Level)*	3 ANTH (400-Level)*	3
LA 283	1.5 BA Fields	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course (GWS)‡	3
General Education Course	3 Elective	3
Elective	3	
<b>16.5</b>		<b>15</b>

### Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ANTH (400-Level)*	3 ANTH (400-Level)*	3
BA Fields	3 BA Fields	3
General Education Course	3 BA World Cultures	3
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 General Education Course (GHW)	1.5
Elective	3 Elective	3
<b>13.5</b>		<b>13.5</b>

**Total Credits 122.5**

\* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

<sup>1</sup> Methods Courses: ANTH 321W, ANTH 380, ANTH 410, ANTH 411, ANTH 425, ANTH 426W, ANTH 427W, ANTH 428, ANTH 432, ANTH 458, ANTH 492, ANTH 493

\*\*Please note: to fulfill the Writing Across the Curriculum requirement, choose one of the listed W courses.

### University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

### Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in World Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as World Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-cultures/>).

### Advising Notes:

- 24 credits within the major must be completed at University Park (policy 83-80). Talk with your academic adviser for additional details.

## Career Paths

Graduates with a B.A. in Anthropology from Penn State excel in diverse professional careers, ranging from academic research, law, medicine, and government to business, cultural resource management, non-governmental organizations, and education. Penn State Anthropology students develop a diversity of sought-after skills in problem-solving, analytical methods, teamwork, and effective oral and written communication. Students are strongly encouraged to become involved in departmental research while at Penn State to augment their training and enhance their prospects for employment or graduate study.

## Careers

Possible career paths include:

- Human Services
- Non-profit organizations

- Non-governmental organizations
- Law
- Health professions
- Human resources
- Marketing
- Public health
- Government agencies: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), US Department of State-Foreign Service
- Advanced research in the field

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM (<https://americananthro.org/careers/careers-in-anthropology/>)

## Opportunities for Graduate Studies

Anthropology majors will find that their undergraduate education is excellent preparation for the advanced training required for many professions. Our majors often go on to receive specialized graduate instruction in medicine, law, journalism, public administration, and virtually all of the "human services" fields. Although many professional schools require that undergraduate applicants have some specialized training (for example, chemistry courses for pre-med students), such course requirements are easily accommodated within the anthropology major. Most professional schools and graduate programs seek well-rounded, broadly educated applicants who can understand the implications of the advanced, specialized training they will receive in post-graduate training.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<https://bioanth.org/career/career-biological-anthropology/>)

## Professional Resources

- American Anthropological Association (<https://americananthro.org>)
- American Association of Biological Anthropologists (<https://bioanth.org>)
- Society for American Archaeology (<https://www.saa.org>)

## Contact

### University Park

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY  
237 Susan Welch Liberal Arts Building  
University Park, PA 16802  
814-865-2509  
[anthropology@psu.edu](mailto:anthropology@psu.edu)

<https://anth.la.psu.edu>