

Anthropology

Chair

Andrew Kitchen

Director of Graduate Studies

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Director of Undergraduate Studies

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Undergraduate major: anthropology (BA, BS)

Undergraduate minor: anthropology

Graduate degrees: MA in anthropology; PhD in anthropology

Faculty: <https://anthropology.uiowa.edu/people>

Website: <https://anthropology.uiowa.edu/>

Anthropology is the comparative study of peoples and cultures past and present. The discipline's two major subfields—medical anthropology and archaeology—share a holistic, global perspective and commitment to field-based methodologies. Anthropological knowledge constructively contributes these perspectives and methods to work in other social sciences, physical and biological sciences, and the arts and humanities.

Anthropology provides a framework for understanding the relation of human beings to their natural environment and to the social and cultural worlds they create and inhabit. The field provides insight into biological and sociocultural evolution and examines how economic, social, and political processes, symbolic systems, and social structures interact to shape human experience. Fieldwork-based comparative studies of past and present cultures yield information on regularities and differences, and special insight into the diversity of human creativity and cultural change.

Anthropological training provides skills useful in a variety of careers. As the American Anthropological Association points out, "careful record-keeping, attention to details, analytical reading, and clear thinking are taught by anthropological courses. Social ease in strange situations, critical thinking, and strong skills in oral and written expression are cultivated by anthropological training."

For undergraduates, the department offers two optional tracks within the major—archaeology and medical anthropology—for students with specialized interests in these areas.

The Department of Anthropology also offers numerous courses that undergraduate students in all majors may use to fulfill GE CLAS Core requirements.

At the graduate level, the department grants both MA and PhD degrees in anthropology. Most students enter the PhD program and are awarded an MA after fulfilling program requirements at the end of their second year. The department also offers a terminal MA degree with a focus on cultural resource management (CRM) in archaeology, which provides academic preparation for a professional career in this field. Students work closely with faculty and staff from the Office of the State Archaeologist.

The department serves as the administrative home for Global Health Studies, which offers two undergraduate degrees, a minor, and a graduate certificate; see Global Health Studies in the catalog for more information.

Faculty

Members of the anthropology faculty work within and across the discipline's two subfields, and conduct both localized and multi-sited field research at locations worldwide, including South and Southeast Asia; Europe; southern Africa; North America (especially the United States); South America; and the Pacific (especially Hawaii and New Zealand).

Current faculty interests include North America, cultural politics, environmental anthropology, European archaeology, feminist anthropology and sexuality studies, medical anthropology, science and technology studies, and Asian studies. For more details, visit People on the Department of Anthropology website.