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Introduction to the Graduate Student Handbook

This handbook is a guide for graduate students in the Department of Anthropology at UT Austin. It describes the regulations of the graduate program in Anthropology, the procedures that students are expected to follow, and the standards required for continuation in the program. It should be noted that these are the department's regulations, procedures, and standards, and that although this statement also describes many of the most important of the University and Graduate School's regulations, it does not include all of them. All students should also familiarize themselves with those regulations as set out in General Information, the Graduate School Catalog, and the Graduate School Web site. (http://www.utexas.edu/ogs).

The Graduate School is run by the Office of Graduate Studies, which is headed by the Vice-President of the University and the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Graduate School includes numerous Graduate Studies Committees (GSCs) representing different departments and programs. The Department of Anthropology has two Graduate Studies Committees (GSCs). One GSC represents the entire department (all four subfields) and a second GSC represents the subfield of sociocultural and focuses on issues of graduate education related particularly to that subfield.

Summary of the graduate program and program milestones

The Department of Anthropology’s GSC (Graduate Studies Committee) is composed of all faculty members in the department. It is represented by a steering committee known as the GSSC (Graduate Studies Steering Committee) which is chaired by an elected member of the faculty.

The Graduate Advisor (faculty) and the Graduate Coordinator (staff) will be your primary sources of information about and interaction with the graduate program. In addition, the Chair of Anthropology’s Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) and the Associate Chair of the Department are active in day-to-day operations of the graduate program.

The Department of Anthropology accepts students with either undergraduate or graduate degrees into the Ph.D. program. Those joining the program with only an undergraduate degree are required to complete a Master’s degree as part of their Ph.D. training. Regardless of prior degree, all students are expected to defend their dissertation within six years (as required by the University of Texas). In addition to the requirements listed below, which outline the progressive steps through the program, you are required to maintain good academic standing throughout the program (basically this means maintaining a GPA higher than 3.0, communicating with supervisors, completing necessary paperwork, etc.). Failure to maintain 'good standing' may result in academic probation (detailed in section V10).
M.A. Stream (you enter into Anthropology with only an undergraduate degree in hand)

Upon entering the program, you are considered an M.A. Student. You are required to take coursework and are expected to write and defend either an M.A. Thesis or M.A. Report by the end of your second year in the program. Upon successful completion of your M.A. you must apply to enter the Ph.D. program. The department does not accept students who seek only an M.A. into our graduate program.

Upon entering the Ph.D. program, you are considered a Ph.D. Student. Additional graduate coursework should be completed in your third year. Upon completion of required course work you must pass your Qualifying Exams* and Prospectus Defense. At this point you submit an application to become a Ph.D. Candidate. Once you are in candidacy (also known as ABD, or “All But Dissertation”), you will complete your research, write your dissertation and defend it before being awarded a Ph.D.

Ph.D. Stream (you enter into Anthropology with a graduate degree in Anthropology or a related field already in hand).

Upon entering the program, you are considered a Ph.D. Student. The first year or two are typically taken up by coursework. Upon completion of required course work you must pass your Qualifying Exams* and Prospectus Defense. At this point you submit an application to become a Ph.D. Candidate. Once you are in candidacy (also known as ABD-All But Dissertation) you will complete your research, write your dissertation and defend it before being awarded a Ph.D.

I. RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPARTMENTAL AND UNIVERSITY STAFF

The legislative body of the Graduate School is the Graduate Assembly, which is an elected group of faculty from across the University. The Vice President and Dean of the Graduate School, along with the Graduate Assembly, are responsible for overall policy and maintaining the quality of graduate work at the University.

The conduct of graduate work at The University of Texas at Austin is the responsibility of Graduate Studies Committees under the administration of the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) of the Department of Anthropology is composed of all assistant, associate, and full professors who actively participate in the department's graduate program. This includes all faculty who hold at least 50% appointments in the Department, plus a number of faculty from other departments on campus who hold courtesy appointments in Anthropology. The Anthropology GSC sets policy and supervises the department's graduate program for all students. It is responsible, among other things, for supervising graduate course offerings, recommending admission of students to the master's and doctoral program, setting requirements for degrees, selecting or nominating students for awards and assistantships, establishing standards for continuation in the program, and reviewing student progress. Since our faculty is very large, many of the

* Alternatively also called Candidacy or Comprehensive Exams
Responsibilities of the GSC are delegated to the Department’s Graduate Studies Steering Committee (GSSC), which is composed of a subset of faculty from across all subfields of the Department.

The GSSC is responsible for, among other things:

1. deliberating and making decisions about nominations and awards for certain graduate fellowships and funding opportunities (e.g., Departmental, College, and University-wide funding competitions)
2. making recommendations about allocations of graduate support money among, for example, recruitment versus dissertation writing support, and
3. approving formal admittance to the Ph.D. program.

Additionally, a subcommittee of members of the GSSC is responsible for allocating TA-ships for the department. This subcommittee is chaired by the Associate Chair and includes the Department's Graduate Advisor and Graduate Coordinator, plus several additional faculty. The subcommittee consists of at least one representative from each of the four subfields. The GSSC (with considerable feedback from individual faculty supervisors) also deliberates and makes recommendations about other student issues that may arise from time to time, e.g., recommending the termination of a student’s program upon finding that the student is not making satisfactory progress. Finally, any revisions or additions to degree plan requirements or to our program's degree milestones go first through the GSSC for discussion before being deliberated by the whole Graduate Studies Committee. The general idea is that the GSSC represents the larger GSC on decisions involving individual students and also brings recommendations involving policy to the whole GSC.

Student input into departmental policies and procedures is provided by student-determined representatives who are invited to attend regular meetings of the Department of Anthropology’s Expanded Budget Council (EBC) and the Anthropology Graduate Studies Steering Committee (GSSC).

The Graduate Adviser is a faculty member who serves as the administrative link between the department and the Office of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Advisor's responsibilities include administering registration, student evaluations, and monitoring students’ progress through the program. The Associate Chair oversees graduate and undergraduate programs, including course planning, and addresses students concerns. The Graduate Coordinator is a staff member who assists the Graduate Adviser, Associate Chair, and GSC Chairs with administrative matters, maintains student records, and can answer many student queries.
II. ADVISING

A faculty supervisor is assigned to each student upon admission to the program. This initial assignment is provisional, and its continuation is subject to the approval of both parties. A student must always have a faculty supervisor who is a member of the GSC and has a 50% or greater appointment in the Department. Students can freely change supervisors, provided that the newly proposed supervisor is willing and the former adviser is informed of the change. Students must report all changes of supervisor to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Adviser.

Students should plan their program of studies in consultation with their faculty supervisor. Students in the first two years of the program are required to submit advising/registration forms. Forms must be approved and signed by the student’s faculty supervisor and the Graduate Adviser. Students should get their proposed coursework approved by their faculty supervisor before seeking the Graduate Advisor's signature. Students who have not already obtained their supervisor's approval of their program should not expect the Graduate Adviser to sign their registration forms. Since faculty members are not always on campus at the time of registration, students should complete the department's registration form, and have it signed by their supervisor, during the previous period of pre-registration.

Students must maintain close communication with their faculty supervisor at every stage of their graduate study if they are to remain in good standing. The supervisor should be involved in all major decisions regarding a student's graduate work.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.A. DEGREE

The Masters of Anthropology degree is awarded as a stepping-stone to a Ph.D. degree in Anthropology. To be accepted into the Anthropology graduate program, a student must be interested in continuing on to a doctoral degree. The department does not admit students into a terminal M.A. degree. See: http://liberalarts.utexas.edu/anthropology/graduate/Master-of-Arts.php

III.1. Degree Requirements

The Program of Work for the M.A. degree in Anthropology is offered in two options: with a thesis or with a report. The thesis option requires 30 semester hours of coursework; the report option requires 33. Both options require students to complete the following: 6 semester hours of core graduate-level coursework in Anthropology; a minimum of 12 additional semester hours of graduate-level coursework in Anthropology; a minimum of 6 semester hours of coursework commonly taken as a minor outside the Department of Anthropology; and either a dedicated report or thesis course.

Master's Degree with Thesis: Students choosing to complete their M.A. degree under this option will normally have a Program of Work structured as follows:

- 6 hours of anthropology core courses
● 12 hours of additional course work (including at least 6 hours of graduate-level coursework in Anthropology, excluding the courses listed above)
● 6 hours of supporting work (minor)
● 6 hours of thesis coursework (ANT 698A and ANT 698B)
● 30 hours total

**Master's Degree with Report:** Students choosing to complete their M.A. degree under this this option will normally have a Program of Work structured as follows:

- 6 hours of anthropology core courses
- 12 hours of additional course work (including at least 6 of graduate-level coursework in Anthropology, excluding the courses listed above)
- 6 hours of supporting work (minor)
- 6 hours of other courses (can be in Anthropology or in other areas)
- 3 hours master's report coursework (ANT 398R)

- 33 hours total

Up to a maximum of 9 semester hours of upper-division undergraduate coursework may be included in the Program of Work for the M.A. degree, and no more than six of these hours may be in the major area (Anthropology). The curriculum in Anthropology is designed to allow for considerable flexibility in the organization of individual program. Students should work with their individual faculty supervisor and the Graduate Adviser in tailoring their program of study to their individual needs and interests.

**III.2. Core Course Requirement**

Each student in the M.A. program must complete at least two departmental core courses, at least one of which must be in the student's primary sub-discipline. Subfields may also require additional core courses to be taken. Core courses may not be taken on a Credit/No Credit basis, and students must receive a grade of B or better in a core course for it to count towards completion of degree requirements. Most core courses serve as introductions to advanced topics of study, and students are urged to complete their core course requirements as early as possible in their program. The selection of core courses should be made in consultation with the student's faculty supervisor.

The Department tries to offer the following core courses regularly:

- Introduction to Graduate Archaeology
- Introduction to Cultural Forms
- Introduction to Graduate Linguistic Anthropology
- Introduction to Primate Morphology and Evolution
- Introduction to Primate Behavior, Genetics, and Variation
- Introduction to Graduate Social Anthropology
Students who have taken a course comparable to one of the core courses, e.g., as part of M.A. work at another institution, may petition the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) for transfer credit for the course. The petition must be accompanied by appropriate supporting materials (e.g., a course syllabus and reading list) and a letter of support from the student's supervisor. If the GSC approves the request, the department will recommend to the Graduate Dean that credit be transferred. Students are responsible for obtaining all official documentation required by the Graduate Dean for such a petition. See: https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/transfer-credit

III.3. Additional Subfield-Specific Requirements

Subfields have the following requirements:

**Linguistic Anthropology** students must take *Introduction to Graduate Linguistic Anthropology* (recommended for Spring of first year). We also recommend taking *Introduction to Graduate Social Anthropology* in the second year of one’s program.

**Sociocultural Anthropology** students must complete *Introduction to Graduate Social Anthropology* and *Introduction to Cultural Forms*.

**Biological Anthropology** students must take *Introduction to Primate Morphology and Evolution* and *Introduction to Primate Behavior, Genetics, and Variation*.

**Archaeology** students must take *Introduction to Graduate Archaeology*.

III.4. Supporting Work

We require a minimum of six (6) hours in a supporting subject or subjects. These courses do not have to be offered in the same department, but must support the student's work in anthropology. Courses taught by anthropology faculty members that are cross-listed with other departments do not count as supporting work. Generally, language acquisition and professional development courses will not count toward the requirement. Determination of which courses may count toward the supporting work requirement is at the discretion of the student’s supervisor.

III.5. Conference Courses

Master's students may only count two conference courses in the Program of Work for the M.A. degree. It is strongly recommended that Master's students take a maximum of one conference course per semester.
III.6. Research with Human Participants/Animal Research

All Master's students who propose to conduct research involving human subjects must submit a research proposal to the Faculty Institutional Review Board (IRB) Representative. The proposal will be forwarded to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University. This must be done prior to the fieldwork, including preliminary or exploratory research. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in denial of degree. See: https://research.utexas.edu/ors/human-subjects/

Graduate student research involving the use of live animals must be approved by UT Austin’s Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. See: https://research.utexas.edu/ors/animal-research/

Graduate students research requiring travel to restricted regions must be approved by the International Oversight Committee. See: https://world.utexas.edu/risk/policies/restricted-regions

These are critical, obligatory steps for completing research. Please be aware that these approval processes can take up to several weeks for final review.

III.7. Transfer of Credit

A maximum of six (6) semester hours of graduate-level coursework in which the grade is A or B may be transferred from another institution. Courses may not have been used toward any other degree. Students wishing to transfer credit should petition the Graduate Studies Steering Committee and should include evidence of their supervisor's support in their petition. If the GSSC approves the request, the department will recommend to the Graduate Dean that credit be transferred. Students are responsible for obtaining all official documentation required by the Graduate Dean for such a petition. See: https://gradschool.utexas.edu/academics/policies/transfer-credit

III.8. Minimum Grade Point Average

Students are required to maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average in all upper-division and graduate coursework (this includes courses in supporting work) to remain in good-standing. Failure to meet this requirement will result in a 'Warning Status.'

III.9. Supervising Committee and the M.A. Thesis/Report Option

The supervising committee for a student's M.A. thesis or report consists of the student's faculty supervisor and a second member, both of whom are normally members of a Graduate Studies Committee. The supervisor must be a member of the GSC and have a 50% or greater appointment in the Department. In some cases, a third member may be included on the committee.

The choice between the master's thesis and master's report should be made in consultation with the supervising committee. The Graduate Catalog distinguishes the report from the thesis on the basis of the
nature of the research, but a variety of other factors may also affect the choice, including sub-discipline, career plans, publication plans, and coursework requirements.

### III.10. Filing for the Degree

Students should contact the Graduate Coordinator during the first week of the semester in which they expect to receive their M.A. degree. The Graduate Coordinator will advise them of relevant deadlines, some of which are early in the semester, and other related items. Students should discuss these deadlines with the members of their supervising committee, who may impose additional deadlines for the submission of drafts and revisions. Students are strongly urged to deliver the final copy of their thesis or report to their supervisor and committee several weeks prior to the college deadline.

### III.11. Time Limit for Completion of the Degree

All requirements for the M.A. degree must be completed by the end of the second year in the program.