ANTHROPOLOGY, PHD

Anthropology, the study of humanity in its broadest sense, was called by Alfred Kroeber "the most humanistic of the sciences and the most scientific of the humanities." At Tulane anthropology is divided into four subdisciplines: archaeology, biological anthropology, cultural anthropology, and linguistic anthropology. These subdisciplines are not silos, however; anthropologists at Tulane often straddle the boundaries of the subdisciplines, and we collaborate with scholars from other departments and schools. Anthropology is perhaps the world's oldest cross-disciplinary discipline, and at Tulane anthropologists study topics as seemingly disparate as two million year-old fossil hominins, the impact of Islam in West Africa, Mayan hieroglyphic texts, political movements in Mexico, and variations in spoken New Orleans English.

The roots of Tulane's Department of Anthropology date back to 1924, when the Department of Middle American Research (now the Middle American Research Institute [MARI]) was founded. Anthropology courses were first offered at Tulane during the 1938-1939 academic year, and by 1947, anthropologists were employed in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology until a separate Department of Anthropology was established in 1967. From the early 1990s to today the Department more than doubled in size, and in 2010, the Department and MARI moved into newly-renovated space in Dinwiddie Hall.

Tulane's Department of Anthropology's traditional strength has been in the archaeology, cultural anthropology, and linguistics of Mesoamerica (that region from Central Mexico to Nicaragua). However, today the teaching and research interests of our faculty have a much more global reach: North America, especially the southeastern United States and the Gulf South, South America and other parts of Central America, the Caribbean, Africa, East, South and Southeast Asia, and Europe.

The Ph.D. program at Tulane is highly competitive; all students admitted to the program receive a stipend and a tuition waiver for four to five years. If you are interested in applying to the program, please contact the faculty member(s) with whom you are interested in working.

Requirements

General Requirements for Graduate Degrees

Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and for the degree of Master of Arts are specified by the graduate faculty and the Department. The regulations discussed on this website include both sets of requirements. In general, the steps for admission to PhD candidacy are:

1. Certification of foreign language competence
2. Completion of coursework
3. Passing of comprehensive examinations
4. Demonstration of competence in basic statistics
5. Passing the oral examination
6. Acceptance of the prospectus for the dissertation

Foreign Language Requirement

The foreign language requirements for the master's and doctoral degrees may be fulfilled in the following ways:

1. By coursework: The student must present evidence of attaining an average of B or better grades in a one-year foreign language course taken at the junior or equivalent level (i.e. 5th and 6th undergraduate semesters) within 3 years of the date of first registration in the Anthropology Graduate Program or by earning a B or better in the summer language courses sponsored by the Tulane Graduate Programs Office.
2. By examination: Departmental language examinations are administered once each semester, on a preannounced date. Students wishing to take a Departmental examination must submit a written request to the Department Chair by a specific date.
3. By native fluency: Native speakers of languages other than English may petition the Anthropology Department to count either English or their native language as satisfying a foreign language requirement.

Doctoral (PhD) Program in Anthropology

The Department enrolls qualified students in programs of study specializing in archaeology, biological anthropology, cultural anthropology, and linguistic anthropology. The formal requirements for the PhD in anthropology are:

1. Completion of a minimum of 48 hours of coursework beyond the BA degree, at least 15 hours of which must be at the 700 level. Students specializing in biological anthropology must complete 54 hours of coursework beyond the BA degree; those specializing in archaeology must complete 60 hours of coursework beyond the BA degree.
2. Demonstration of competence in basic statistics. This requirement must be completed before advancement to candidacy for the PhD or before the award of the MA degree. It is expected that most students would fulfill this requirement before the end of their coursework residency. The statistics requirement may be satisfied by three options:
a. Satisfactory completion of a college-level course in basic statistics no more than 5 years prior to entering the Graduate Program in Anthropology at Tulane. A student wishing to pursue this option should petition the Department, providing bulletin copy and other relevant documentation in support of the petition.

b. Satisfactory completion for graduate credit of a course in statistical methods at Tulane. A grade of B or better in ANTH 6010 Quantitative Methods in ANTH (3 c.h.) or a preapproved course in another department satisfies this option. A student wishing to use other graduate level courses should petition the Department, in advance, for approval.

c. A student seeking certification in basic statistics without proper course credit may petition the Department for special examination in basic statistics. The Department administers such an examination only once during each academic year, pertaining to all petitions approved during the preceding 12 months.

3. Within biological anthropology, students specializing in skeletal biology or human paleontology must take a course in (ANAT 6090 Gross Anatomy/Embryology (11 c.h.)) and one additional course in a related field outside the Anthropology Department, in addition to 48 hours of coursework within the Department. Students specializing in Primatology must take 3 courses in related field outside the Department in addition to 45 hours of coursework in the Department. Related fields include Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Biomedical Engineering, Cell and Molecular Biology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Psychology. The selection of courses taken outside of the Department is to be agreed upon by the student and his or her faculty advisor.

4. Certification in one foreign language (see Foreign Language Requirement, above). It is desirable that the foreign language requirement be met within 18 months of matriculation. The requirement must be fulfilled before admission to candidacy.

5. An 8-hour written comprehensive examination will be administered over two consecutive days before the conclusion of the 6th semester of residency. This comprehensive examination will cover the subdiscipline of Anthropology in which the student is specializing.

6. An oral examination of one hour will be required of students in archaeology, linguistic anthropology, and cultural anthropology. These oral exams must be taken before the end of the 6th semester of residency. In archaeology and cultural anthropology, the oral exam will cover the anthropology of the geographic area of the student’s specialization. In linguistics, the exam will cover the topic of the student’s specialization. Biological anthropology does not require an oral exam. Students must petition the Department Chair in writing for the formation of an oral examination committee. Usually, the student’s advisor will chair his/her committee. Other members will be chosen by the Department.

7. Submission of a brief prospectus outlining the subject of the dissertation and approval of this by the Department and the Graduate Council. Guidelines for the preparation of prospectuses are available in the Department office. Students must petition the Department Chair in writing for the formation of a dissertation prospectus committee. Usually, the student’s advisor will chair his/her committee. Other members will be chosen by the Department. Normally, prospectus committees will be formed only after the student has passed the comprehensive and oral examinations. However, grant application deadlines may make it necessary for some students to define their dissertation research ahead of schedule. In such instances, a student may petition the Department Chair in writing for the formation of an advisory committee. Usually, the student’s advisor will chair his/her advisory committee. The Department will select other members. This advisory committee will automatically become the student’s dissertation prospectus committee upon successful completion of the oral and comprehensive examinations.

   a. All students must give each and every member of the Departmental faculty, including Dr. Canuto at MARI, a copy of the prospectus at least 3 business days before the prospectus defense is to take place. For example, if the defense is scheduled for Tuesday at 3:00pm, then copies are due in the hands of the faculty before 3:00pm the preceding Tuesday.

8. Completion of approximately 1 year of approved anthropological field work. Data collected are usually used in the doctoral dissertation.

9. Presentation of a dissertation on the approved topic and an oral defense of the dissertation before the faculty of the Department. Students who intend to defend a dissertation must inform the Chair of the Department, in writing, of that intention during the first 2 weeks of the semester in which they wish the defense to be scheduled. Students wishing to receive the PhD degree at May graduation must have a complete copy of their dissertation in the hands of their committee members by February 1. Students wishing to receive the PhD degree in December must give their committee members their complete dissertations by October 15.

10. All doctoral students are expected to receive some teaching experience. This teaching will be, to the extent feasible, mentored and monitored by the Department, primarily through its Graduate Student Teaching Oversight Committee (GSTOC). Eligibility for teaching ANTH 1010 Introduction to Biological Anthropology (3 c.h.) (Human Origins) includes qualification in the areas of archaeology and biological anthropology. Qualification in archaeology can be accomplished by satisfactory completion of ANTH 6250 Old World Paleolithic Prehistory (3 c.h.) or ANTH 7150 Prehistory of Africa (3 c.h.) or by passing the archaeology comprehensive examination. Qualification in biological anthropology can be accomplished by satisfactory completion of ANTH 6500 Human Evolution (3 c.h.) or by passing the biological anthropology comprehensive exam. Eligibility for teaching ANTH 1020 Cultural Anthropology (3 c.h.) includes qualification in cultural anthropology, which can be accomplished by satisfactory completion of a theory course from List A, below, and an ethnography course from List B, or by passing the cultural anthropology comprehensive examination. Eligibility for teaching ANTH 1030 Languages of The World (3 c.h.) can be accomplished by satisfactory completion of ANTH 7290 Linguistic Analysis (3 c.h.) or equivalent and one of the following: ANTH 7310 Prehistory of Languages (3 c.h.), ANTH 7590 Syntactic Theory (3 c.h.), ANTH 7630 Linguistic Phonetics (3 c.h.), ANTH 7640 Phonology (3 c.h.), ANTH 7650 Morphology (3 c.h.) or by passing the comprehensive exam in linguistic anthropology.

List A (Theory Courses in Cultural Anthropology)

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<tr>
<td>ANTH 6210</td>
<td>Development of Anthropological Theory</td>
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<td>ANTH 6350</td>
<td>Culture and Religion</td>
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ANTH 6510 Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism 3
ANTH 7190 Economic Anthropology 3
ANTH 7330 Anthropology of Gender 3
ANTH 7360 Anthropology of Cities 3
ANTH 7700 Ecological Anthropology 3
ANTH 7850 The Four-Field Model 3

List B (Ethnography Courses in Cultural Anthropology)

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<tr>
<td>ANTH 6060</td>
<td>South American Indians</td>
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<td>ANTH 6710</td>
<td>Historical Ecology of Amazonia</td>
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<td>ANTH 7110</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANTH 7370</td>
<td>Locating Southeast Asia</td>
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Transfer Credit Approval

Students may request transfer credit for graduate coursework done at other institutions, as indicated in the Graduate Programs Handbook. Because approval of the request for the transfer of courses has the effect of decreasing the course residency requirement, students receiving such approval will decrease by one or two semesters their ability for financial aid.