The Department of Anthropology offers a Major in Anthropology with three concentrations and a minor. In addition, students may pursue Anthropology as part of the LAS Major in Computer Science & Anthropology (http://catalog.illinois.edu/undergraduate/eng_las/computer-science-anthropology-bslas).

Anthropology combines scientific and humanistic interests in human biology and diverse cultures (both past and present) to provide in-depth knowledge and broad perspectives on the human condition. The anthropology major develops research, writing and analytical skills that enable graduates to confront problems, issues and situations that require understanding of cultural differences and human biological variation. College graduates with a background in anthropology thrive in a broad range of jobs and professions including global/international relations, social work, education, law, medicine and health professions, bioscience and technology, government, NGOs and business, as well as further graduate study in anthropology.

Professional anthropologists work as research scientists and teachers in museums, universities, and archaeological surveys; as staff members in government agencies, social service programs, and business firms in which international understanding of human and social concerns is important; or as independent consultants to such agencies, programs, and firms.

The Major in Anthropology includes all four fields of anthropology:

- biological anthropology (biological diversity and evolutionary history of human and nonhuman primates),
- archaeology (human prehistory and the organization and growth of technology and society),
- sociocultural anthropology (daily life at home and abroad; identity and power in social contexts),
- linguistic anthropology (language and communication in cultural contexts).

Although the student should strive for a topical and geographical balance, an undergraduate may specialize in one of these four branches and may also study a world cultural area intensively through an area studies program.

The Archaeology Concentration offers students a program to explore the human past through its material remains to understand cultural and societal change through time, and the role of heritage in the present. We offer many opportunities for students to conduct research with faculty in our archaeology labs, field schools, and in our extensive research collections.

The Human Evolutionary Biology Concentration offers students a program to examine the interconnections between genetics, environment and culture to address issues from human origins and morphology to forensics and modern health.

The Sociocultural and Linguistic Anthropology Concentration offers students a program of more focused coursework in these closely related fields. Sociocultural anthropologists study the daily lives of people around the world, both at home and abroad. They conduct field research to get a hands-on feel for people’s lives and passions and examine everything from beauty pageants to political protest marches, from Disney films to the lab practices of nuclear scientists. Sociocultural anthropology distinguishes itself from other disciplines by its conviction that these local and personal details offer a crucial window on the largest processes and problems of our time, from globalization to race relations and violence.

Linguistic anthropology complements sociocultural anthropology with detailed attention to spoken and signed languages—their structure and use in the daily lives of people around the world, both at home and abroad. Linguistic anthropologists examine such things as the “English Only” movement in the United States, the persuasive language of advertising and politics, racism and hate speech, oral/gestural storytelling traditions around the world, communication in the classroom, on social media, or at the United Nations, as well as how the way we talk creates our sense of self and reality.

Because the field of anthropology presents a wide range of disciplinary perspectives on the human condition, students electing this major concentration are encouraged to select from among relevant course offerings in archaeology or biological anthropology to fulfill General Education requirements.
Graduate Degree Programs

The Department of Anthropology offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees. We generally do not accept students for a terminal M.A.

Admission

Students without the equivalent of the department’s undergraduate concentration may be admitted to either degree program, but they may be required to make up any deficiencies in their anthropological backgrounds. In addition to the Graduate College admission requirements, students are required to submit Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. Students whose native language is not English are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), with minimum scores set by the Graduate College. Students are admitted for the fall term only.

Students wishing to pursue the minor in Museum Studies must be in good standing in the graduate program of an academic department, and must apply for acceptance into the minor. Admission to the minor is contingent upon approval of the student’s home department and the Museum Studies Steering Committee. Students may apply to the minor during the first week of the fall and spring semesters in any academic year, and should contact the Museum Studies Program Coordinator for application instructions or more information.

Degree Requirements

Each subfield (Archaeology, Biological Anthropology, and Sociocultural/Linguistic Anthropology) requires a specific set of courses for graduation. Achieving doctoral candidacy in all three subfields entails passing (a) language (and/or skill) exam(s), (b) passing a set of preliminary examinations, and (c) successfully submitting a pre-dissertation paper, and/or a doctoral proposal, all to be defended in an oral examination. For specific details and requirements for admission to and navigation of the Ph.D. program, please refer to the Anthropology Department Graduate Programs Handbook (http://www.anthro.illinois.edu/programs/graduate/resources/AnthGradHandbook.pdf) and the University of Illinois Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook).

Graduate Teaching Experience

Although teaching is not a general Graduate College requirement, the Anthropology Department recognizes the importance of teaching experience as part of a graduate education. Most Anthropology graduate students will have the opportunity to work as teaching assistants, to learn to design their own classes, and possibly teach their own classes.

Faculty Research Interests and Facilities

Courses and individualized study provide broad coverage of sociocultural, linguistic, archaeological, and physical anthropology. The department provides special emphases in the analyses of state ideologies and cultural transformations; complex societies in transition; kinship and gender relations; politics, economics, and business studies; social movements and youth; border studies, criminalities, violence, and security; religion, race, and ethnicity; democracy, governance, and policing; social classification; performance and embodiment; food and environment; language and culture; discourse and narrative analysis; transnationalism and diasporas; human evolution; agricultural origins and development; landscape histories and heritage; hunter-gatherer adaptations; climate change and sustainability; diet and nutrition; paleoecology and paleobiology; evolutionary genetics; population genetics; peopling of the Americas; ancient DNA; biomechanics of locomotion; exercise and neurobiology; functional morphology; comparative and analytical osteology; forensics; demography; immunology; evolutionary medicine; microbe-host interaction; reproductive ecology; female reproductive physiology; conservation; and nonhuman primate evolution, morphology, behavior, and ecology. The department’s research facilities include laboratories for archaeology, GIS and spatial computing, faunal analysis, casting, stable-isotope analysis, ethnography, ancient DNA, skeletal biology, locomotion and motion analysis, and endocrinology.

Departmental funds and a grant from the National Science Foundation, as well as from area studies centers, are available for graduate students’ summer field research. An archaeology field school is held at various locations in Illinois and outside of the US (location varies from year to year). Graduate student programs are enriched by close departmental relationships with the various interdisciplinary units, including area studies centers on campus (African, East Asian and Pacific, European Union, Latin America and Caribbean, Russian and East European; South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies), the ethnic and gender studies units (the American Indian Studies Program and the departments of African-American Studies, Asian American Studies, Gender and Women’s Studies, and Latina/Latino Studies), along with the Women and Gender in Global Perspectives Program, Spurlock Museum, the Museum of Natural History, Krannert Art Museum, the Institute for Genomic Biology, and the Program in Ancient Technologies and Archaeological Materials.

Agreements between the University and various governments and institutes facilitate research in many nations. Training is available in various languages (some with funding available), including Arabic, Bengali, Burmese, Chinese, Hausa, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Quechua, Lingala, Russian, Shona, Swhahili, Thai, and Urdu. Students have ready access to the extensive computer facilities of the University and to the department’s facilities.

Financial Aid

University fellowships, Graduate College fellowships for underrepresented minorities, and teaching and research assistantships provide variable levels of funding for most graduate students who do not hold external awards. Tuition and service fee waivers accompany
most fellowships and assistantships. Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships are available through various area centers. University of Illinois public archaeology programs, including the Illinois State Archaeological Survey and the Public Service Archaeology and Architecture Program, have provided support and research employment for graduate students in the past, as has the U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratory in Champaign.