

# Master of Arts in Anthropology **GRADUATE HANDBOOK**

## **DIVISION of Anthropology**

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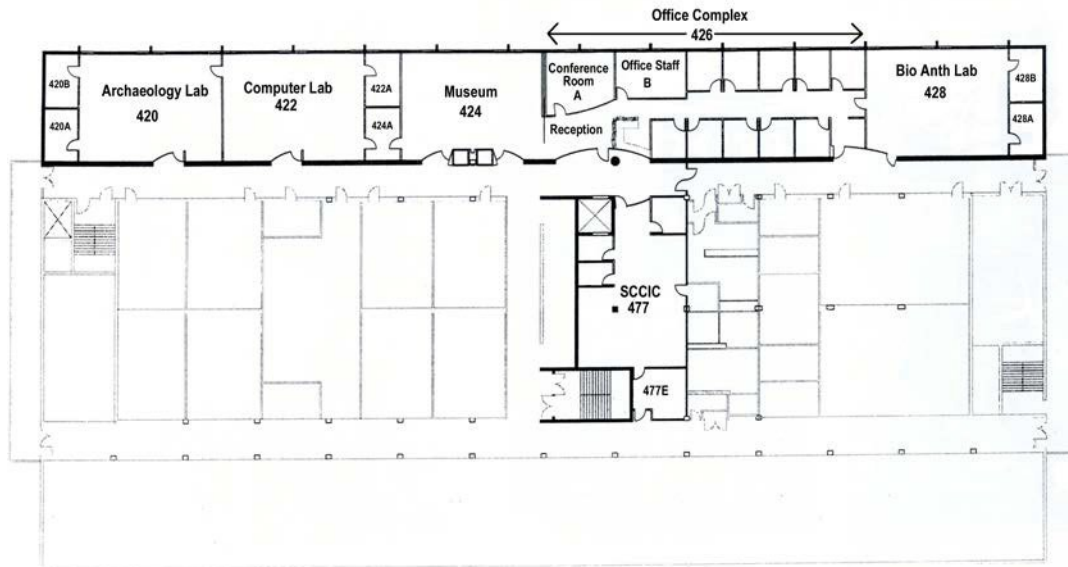
<http://anthro.fullerton.edu/>



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MH-420a and MH-420b: Research Rooms

MH-422: Computer Lab

MH-422a: Computer Lab IT Consultant's Office

MH-424: Teaching Museum

MH-424a: Museology Office and Support/Storage

MH-426: Office Complex: Reception, Conference Room, Office Staff, and Faculty Offices

MH-428: Biological Anthropology Teaching Lab

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MH-477: South Central Coastal Information Center

MH-477E: Faculty Offices

Not shown:

MH-2 and MH-54b: In basement, Archaeology Research and Curation Facility

MH-51: Lithic Research Lab

# **Division of Anthropology California State University, Fullerton**

## **Master of Arts in Anthropology**

The graduate program in anthropology offers advanced study in four-field scientific anthropology with a specialization in Anthropological Archaeology, Cultural Anthropology, or Evolutionary Anthropology. For information on faculty interests in these areas please visit our Division website at <http://anthro.fullerton.edu>. We admit new students in both Fall and Spring.

Our graduate students have successfully completed MA theses and projects incorporating field, library, and lab-based research. For example, students have conducted field research in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and here in California; analyzed archaeological collections; worked in zoos and museums; and integrated anthropology into curricula at the K-12 and community college levels.

As a graduate student you will work closely with your individual MA advisor and MA committee in developing an exam, thesis or project that meets your educational needs and expectations. For that reason, it is important that before applying to the program you familiarize yourself with our faculty and their research expertise and interests. The Graduate Program Advisor (subfield Coordinator) and your individual MA advisor will help you to understand, navigate, and fulfill division and university requirements and regulations.

### **I. HOW TO APPLY TO THE MA PROGRAM IN ANTHROPOLOGY**

1. Apply through the Cal State Apply system (<https://www.calstate.edu/apply>). All application materials must be submitted through this system.

#### **2. DEADLINE:**

Fall 2026: The deadline for Fall applications to Cal State Apply and the Division of Anthropology is May 1 for domestic and international applicants.

Spring 2027: The deadline for Spring applications to Cal State Apply and the Division of Anthropology is October 1 for domestic and international applicants.

#### **3. QUALIFICATIONS:**

##### **University Requirements:**

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution
- Grade-point average of at least 2.5 in the last 60 semester units attempted

### **Division of Anthropology Requirements:**

- Minimum grade-point average of 3.0 in all undergraduate coursework in anthropology
- Bachelor's degree in anthropology  
-OR-
- Ideally: 21 units of anthropology (Introduction to Biological Anthropology [Anth 101], Introduction to Cultural Anthropology [Anth 102], Introduction to Archaeology [Anth 103] or equivalents; History of Anthropology [Anth 480] and Contemporary Anthropology [Anth 481] or equivalents; plus 12 additional units of upper division anthropology coursework or equivalents), with a combined GPA of 3.0 or better. Students who lack ANTH 480 and/or ANTH 481 or their equivalents may take these courses after admittance to the program.
- Consult with the Graduate Coordinator [cultural, archaeology, or evolutionary] if you have fewer than 21 units of Anthropology.

### **Required Materials for Division of Anthropology Application (submit through Cal State Apply):**

- **Application Form**
- **Letter of intent** (2 pages, single-spaced). Prospective students should describe the area of their interest in anthropology and their goals in relation to the MA program at CSU Fullerton. Describe your past anthropological fieldwork or related experiences, the basis of your interest in our program, what you intend to do with your degree, and other intellectual goals and interests or other relevant information. You should identify the faculty member(s) with whom you wish to work, and the specific research interests you would like to pursue.
- **Three letters of recommendation**
- **List of the anthropology courses you have completed**
- **Unofficial transcripts**
- **One writing sample** (2500 words or more)
- **Curriculum vita or resume**

Preference will be given to well-qualified applicants whose interests match the research interests of the faculty. Prospective students are strongly encouraged to contact faculty members with whom they are interested in working. Applicants are selected by a Graduate Committee within each subfield.

### **QUESTIONS?**

Please contact one of our Graduate Advisors for more information about the program or the application process. Select the person most appropriate for your interests in anthropology:

#### **Archaeological Anthropology**

Dr. Edward Knell     [eknell@fullerton.edu](mailto:eknell@fullerton.edu)     Office: MH-061     Phone: (657) 278-5076

#### **Cultural Anthropology**

Dr. Sarah Grant     [sagrant@fullerton.edu](mailto:sagrant@fullerton.edu)     Office: MH-426C     Phone: (657) 278-4703

#### **Evolutionary Anthropology**

Dr. Elizabeth Pillsworth     [epillsworth@fullerton.edu](mailto:epillsworth@fullerton.edu)     Office: MH-426H     Phone: (657) 278-5603

## STUDY PLAN FOR THE MA IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Graduate students are expected to complete 24 units of coursework plus 6 units of exam, thesis or project (in addition to any course deficiencies). The 30 units are as follows:

**9 units: ANTH 511, 512, and 513**

Three core seminars, ANTH 511 (Theory and Method in Biological Anthropology), ANTH 512 (Theory and Method in Archaeology), and ANTH 513 (Theory and Method in Cultural & Linguistic Anthropology) are required. **Note:** 511 and 512 offered only in fall; 513 only in spring.

**3 units: ANTH 510** Research Design (required). Offered in spring only.

**6 units: Two ANTH 504T** (Graduate Seminar, selected topics)

All graduate students must take at least two ANTH 504T graduate seminars in their sub-field. ANTH 504T courses are variable-topics graduate seminars, through which students have the opportunity to explore topics in more depth. The 504T classes are rotated among the faculty of each subfield to expose students to different research issues in anthropology.

**6 units: Two 400- or 500-level elective courses in anthropology or a related field**

Graduate students take two elective courses, which may be an additional ANTH 504T class, a 400-level class in anthropology, ANTH 599 (Independent Study) with your project/thesis advisor, or a 400- or 500-level class in a related field, with the approval of your thesis advisor. Students taking a 400-level course for graduate credit will be expected (as specified in the course syllabus by University policy) to do additional work beyond that of an undergraduate.

**6 units: ANTH 598 (Thesis) or ANTH 597 (Project) or Exam (3 units + one additional elective)**

To earn the M.A., students are required to register for *either* 6 units of ANTH 598 (Thesis) *or* 6 units of ANTH 597 (Project), *or* 3 units of Exam plus one additional elective. Students may register for all 6 units in the same semester or for 3 units in two semesters. Per University regulations, you are not permitted to enroll in more than 6 TOTAL units of your choice of thesis (598), or project (597).

- All students enter the program on the Comprehensive Exam Track as a default
  - Students wishing to complete a thesis or project instead of the comprehensive exam must submit a proposal to their advisor and committee for approval.
  - Permission to write a thesis or to complete a project is contingent upon (1) maintaining a 3.25 grade point average after 15 units of upper-division and graduate coursework, and (2) demonstrating proficiency in research and writing skills.
- **Thesis Option (6 units of ANTH 598):** A thesis is defined as the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It consists of extended discussion, with a central argument, based on complex analysis of your original research and includes a review of the literature on the topic as well as a historical framework. The finished product demonstrates originality, sets forth the sources for and method of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion. The thesis has a required format and must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies as well as to the Division. The approved thesis will be bound according to certain specifications, microfilmed, copyrighted, and listed in the university library's computer database. Students registered for ANTH 598 (Thesis) are eligible to apply for the Graduate Studies Giles T. Brown Thesis Excellence Award.

- **Project Option (6 units of ANTH 597):** A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to an applied aspect of the field (e.g. curation of a museum exhibition, an ethnographic film, a curriculum proposal, and so forth). Like a thesis, the project also requires a written component, in which the work is described and summarized, including the project's significance, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation. The project is submitted only to the Division, and is housed in the Division Library (bound in a variety of formats as approved by your advisor).
- **Exam Option (3 units of ANTH 599 + one additional elective):** At least one semester before taking their exam, students on the Comprehensive Exam Track will select three areas of concentration in consultation with their MA advisor and committee members. The committee will assist the student in preparing for the exam by assigning a reading list, and will meet with the student for discussion and guidance. Students will have a total of nine hours to answer questions from each of the three areas. The questions are designed to test the depth and breadth of the student's overall general knowledge of anthropology, as well as sub-field specific knowledge pertaining to the student's own research area.

**Methods Requirement or Second Language Requirement** [students select **one** of the options]. Students should work closely with their MA advisors to determine whether the methods course option or the second language proficiency option is best for their program of study.

#### Option 1: Methods Course

In consultation with their faculty advisors, students will select and take one of the following methods courses as appropriate for their chosen subfield and research agenda. Methods courses may be taken as electives on the Study Plan; alternatively, this requirement may be considered fulfilled if a student has taken an approved methods course as an undergraduate.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ○ ANTH 401 Ethnographic Field Methods        | ○ ANTH 445 Quantitative Methods in Anthropology   |
| ○ ANTH 402 Museum Science                    | ○ ANTH 455 Behavioral Observation   |
| ○ ANTH 403 Archaeological Field Methods      | ○ ANTH 458 Sustainable Food Systems   |
| ○ ANTH 404 Analytical Methods in Archaeology | ○ ANTH 463 Archaeofaunal Analysis   |
| ○ ANTH 406 Descriptive Linguistics           | ○ ANTH 476 Archaeological Investigations [field class]  |
| ○ ANTH 418 GIS in Archaeology                | ○ ANTH 498 Museum Practicum   |
| ○ ANTH 425 Lithic Analysis                   | ○ Other courses may be approved by thesis adviser to meet this requirement, including equivalents from other universities |
| ○ ANTH 443 Advanced Human Osteology          |   |
| ○ ANTH 444 Forensic Anthropology             |   |

#### Option 2: Second Language Proficiency

If proficiency in a second language is appropriate for a student's research agenda, a student may show proficiency in several alternative ways. These include, for example, having earned a degree in a language other than English, passing an intermediate-level proficiency exam, completing the equivalent of three years of high school study in another language, completing a Study Abroad program in which the language of instruction was not English. There are several additional options, the details of which should be discussed with your MA advisor.

**Additional courses beyond the 30 units** (up to the limit established by the University). Courses not on the Study Plan do not count toward the MA degree, but still count in calculating your overall grade point average while in the MA program. Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 overall GPA.

**NOTE:** Graduate level classes (500-) typically begin at 4:00 or 7:00 pm and are offered in person only.

## II. STEPS TOWARD the COMPLETION of the MA in ANTHROPOLOGY

1. **Attend the Mandatory Pre-Fall or Pre-Spring Semester Orientation Meeting**
2. **Develop the Study Plan in consultation with your MA advisor or Graduate Coordinator**
3. **If you plan to use postgraduate units** toward your MA, you must petition the Records Office for approval as soon as possible (see “Postgraduate Credit” in the University Catalog).
  - For CSUF students with a BA coming in to the MA program: A maximum of nine units of 400 and 500-level classes taken at CSUF may be applied towards the MA Study Plan, if they meet the following criteria:
    - The grade earned was a B or better
    - The units in questions were taken in the senior year
    - The units were not used toward either the 120 units needed for the BA or toward the 45 units needed for the BA major in Anthropology
  - University policy allows graduate students coming from another university to petition for permission to apply up to nine units of graduate work, in which they earned a B or better, towards the CSUF Study Plan. However, the Division will determine equivalency, if any, of such coursework. Under most circumstances, the Division of Anthropology prefers that students take the core MA coursework at CSUF; typically only an elective course may be substituted.
4. **Work with your MA Advisor** closely in planning your Comprehensive Exam *or* designing your Thesis or Project research in taking courses that will help you achieve your research goals. Discuss with your advisor the composition of your thesis committee, which will be composed of the advisor and two other full time faculty members in the Division of Anthropology.
5. **Advance to Candidacy**: Students will advance to candidacy when they have formed a committee and either created an approved plan for the Comprehensive Exam or filed an approved Prospectus for the Thesis or Project.
6. **Register for EITHER 6 units of Thesis, Project, or Exam [Exam is 3 units + one additional elective]**. (See discussion and description of these options in Section III.) A **maximum** of 6 total units of Thesis or Project is allowed.
7. **File for Graduation**: Students must file for graduation check six months before graduation.
8. **Exceeding the Target Graduation Date**: Students must stay continuously enrolled while in the MA program. If all coursework is completed, students may be approved to enroll in GS700 through Extended Education.
9. **Time to Degree**: The Division of Anthropology is committed to ensuring that graduate students complete the MA degree as quickly as possible. By taking courses full-time or part-time, students can complete the degree using a two-year or three-year plan. Limited extensions may be granted in certain circumstances, but not beyond five years.