Anthropology

Anthropology is a social science committed to the comparative and historical study of humankind. Anthropology literally means the study of humanity and considers human biological and cultural variation. Courses are offered in the traditional sub-fields of anthropology--Cultural, Biological, Archaeology, and Linguistics--and also in Applied Anthropology.

In recent years, the UAB Anthropology program has begun to develop a topical focus on the Anthropology of Peace, Justice, Human Rights, and Ecology. The new applied focus parallels the establishment of the UAB Institute for Human Rights (IHR) in 2014. The Anthropology Department also is the institutional host for the Peaceful Societies web site. For more information about the faculty, researchers, direction, and focus of the department, please see our web pages at: http://www.uab.edu/cas/anthropology/

For Master’s application information, please contact the Graduate Director (contact information appears below) or the Department Chair.

Degree Offered: M.A.
Director: Dr. Loretta Cormier
Phone: (205) 975-6526 or (205) 934-3508
E-Mail: lcormier@uab.edu
Web site: http://www.uab.edu/cas/anthropology/

Degree Requirements

The M.A. degree program includes the basic course requirements, a foreign language or research skill requirement, and the fulfillment of the requirements for either a Plan I (Thesis) or Plan II (Non-thesis) degree.

The UAB Graduate School recognizes two principal paths, called Plan I and Plan II. Upon entry to the program and in consultation with the student’s advisor, either Plan I or II will be designated for each student. A subsequent change in the choice of Plans requires approval of both the Graduate Program Director in Anthropology and of the Dean of the Graduate School.

Basic Course Requirements

Course Work

Each student must complete between 30 and 36 credit hours of courses numbered 500 or above, without special prior approval of the student’s advisor, committee, and the director of graduate studies.

Special Problems courses, including ANTH 691, ANTH 692, ANTH 693, and ANTH 694, cannot be counted towards the minimum 30 hours. (Note that there are additional course requirements for two of the three options outlined below).

Core Curriculum

For information about the Curriculum, please contact either the Graduate Director or the Department Chair.

M.A. Committee

Upon entry to the Anthropology Master’s Program, each degree-seeking student will be assigned a member of the anthropology faculty to serve as the student’s advisor. This may be a temporary assignment and later changed. The student and the assigned advisor should confer about the student’s interests and develop a plan of study. Traditionally, graduate study is flexible and individualized to allow students to pursue their interests. As soon as possible, the overall plan of study should be developed and a committee selected, chaired by the student’s advisor, to guide the student through the study process.

This committee is subject to final approval by the chair and graduate program director and functions as the principal advisory and research project approval board. The committee may include an external member of the Graduate Faculty. (The form for the appointment of a master’s thesis committee can be found at http://graduate.ua.edu/academics/forms/committee_thesis.pdf.)

Comprehensive Examinations

All students must take and pass comprehensive examinations on their knowledge of the field of anthropology. The selection of the three areas will be made in collaboration with the faculty advisor. The entire anthropology faculty will participate in composing the exams and evaluating each student's responses.

The faculty's evaluations will be communicated to the director of graduate studies and to the department chair. Once the student has successfully completed the comprehensive exams, he or she may file for admission to candidacy (see http://graduate.ua.edu/students/forms/).

Inter-Institutional Requirement

Please see the Graduate Director or the Department Chair.

Plans of Study for the Master's Degree

Please see the Graduate Director or the Department Chair.

Additional Information

Deadline for Entry Term(s): Consult Program Director for information
Deadline for All Application Materials to be in the Graduate School Office: Rolling admission
Number of Evaluation Forms Required: Three
Entrance Tests GRE (TOEFL and TWE also required for international applicants whose native language is not English).
Comments See UA catalog and www.as.ua.edu/ant (http://www.as.ua.edu/ant)

Contact Information

For detailed information, contact Dr. Lori Cormier, Graduate Program Director, UAB Department of Anthropology, HHB 311, 1401 University Blvd, Birmingham, Alabama 35294-1152.

Telephone 205-975-6526 or 205-934-3508.
E-mail: lcormier@uab.edu (kyle@uab.edu).
Courses

ANTH 504. Human Rights, Peace, and Justice. 3 Hours.
This course offers an introductory exploration of theories, concepts, and issues involved in the study of peace, human rights, social justice, and conflict resolution. It considers the relationship of human rights to achieving peace with justice, including the role of international law. It introduces the concepts of positive peace, human security, and global interdependence. Finally, the course includes an examination and critique of anthropological approaches to peace and the associated practical applications to real world conflicts, rights violations, and global challenges.

ANTH 505. Anthropology of Peace, Justice, and Ecology. 3 Hours.
This course entails the intensive exploration of peace, social justice, nonviolence, and conflict resolution. It is a team-taught companion course to ANTH 504, “Human Rights, Peace, and Justice.” Together, these two introductory seminars launch first-year Master's students into in-depth examinations and critiques of anthropological approaches to peace, justice, human rights, and ecology as well as into the exploration of theoretical and practical problems and solutions.

ANTH 508. Conflict Resolution in Cross-Cultural Perspective. 3 Hours.
This course explores conflict and conflict management from an anthropological perspective. It includes ethnographic examples from around the globe. Do all societies engage in war? How are conflicts handled in other cultures? The course will challenge a Western view that humans are naturally violent and warlike and consider some interesting anthropological controversies. Specific topics considered include conflict models, origins of war, conflict resolution, socialization of conflict styles, third party mediation, and ways to reduce violence and prevent war.

ANTH 509. Methods in Peace & Human Rights Research & Practice. 3 Hours.
The study of peace, justice, ecology, and human rights draws on a diverse methodological tool-kit and comprehensive skill-sets. This course introduces students to some of these methods such as using online databases, conducting interviews, text analysis, meta-analyses and literature reviews, participant observation, behavior observation, and content analysis. Concrete examples of research methods and practice reveal the interconnectedness of basic and applied research as well as theory and practice.

ANTH 512. Peaceful Societies and Peace Systems. 3 Hours.
This course explores peaceful societies, some of which are internally peaceful and some of which do not make war, as well as peace systems, that is, clusters of neighboring societies that do not make war on each other and possibly not with any outside groups either. The main questions addressed in the course are: How do peaceful societies and peace systems manage to successfully keep the peace? What lessons do peaceful societies and peace systems hold for creating a less violent and warless world?.

ANTH 513. Peace & Environmental Sustainability. 3 Hours.
By highlighting that ecology sets the stage for the social and economic domains, this course traces our interdependence with nature and makes the case that sustaining the natural conditions that are essential for the functioning of the ecosystem on which our lives depends equals sustaining peace. The course takes a positive peace perspective on environmental sustainability goals and methods to achieve them.

ANTH 514. Prehistory of War and Peace in North America. 3 Hours.
This course explores the origins, development, and consequences of conflict and warfare among the prehistoric and early historic indigenous cultures of North America, as well as the complimentary processes of cooperation and peace-making. Archaeological, biological, and ethnohistorical sources are utilized to understand the ways in which war and peace were carried out among a wide variety of Native American cultures from the earliest evidence of human occupation to European contact and beyond. Both indigenous and European practices of war and peace are considered.

ANTH 515. Peace through Global Governance. 3 Hours.
Global governance represents a new dimension in social organization. Anthropology has much to contribute to understanding it. Global governance has the potential to promote social progress and human development, the protection of human rights, peace, and human security. The course examines security—military, collective, and human security—and the evolution of international identity, norms, values, and laws and their contributions to the development of global civil society.

ANTH 516. War & Peace in Ancient Mesopotamia. 3 Hours.
"War & Peace in Ancient Mesopotamia” (ca. 10,000 - 323 BCE) begins with an introduction to the advent of farming, urban life, various crafts, writing, and other innovations in the region of the "Two Rivers," namely the Tigris and Euphrates' flood plain. It proceeds with the rise and fall of early state complex societies and empires in the Bronze and Iron Ages, and terminates in the Persian period. Although providing much focus on diverse issues dealing with war, alliances, diplomacy, treaties, and peace, this course also integrates a comprehensive background context and overview of other aspects of past societies in this region, including history, archaeology, language, literature, religion, architecture, art, material culture, and trade.

ANTH 517. Peace Ethology. 3 Hours.
This course provides insights into causes, mechanisms, development, function, and evolution of peaceful behavior in humans and nonhuman animals. The course shows how studying the role of peaceful behavior in the survival and propagation of animal life has direct significance for improving our understanding of the evolved abilities for peace in humans.

ANTH 518. The Power of Nonviolence. 3 Hours.
This course introduces students to the theory and practice of nonviolence as a manner of social change and as a philosophy. The course explores some of the classic writings on nonviolence such as those by Tolstoy, Gandhi, and King as well as current research findings on the efficacy of nonviolent social change, for instance, the work of Sharp, Nagler, Ackerman, and Chenoweth. Readings, films, small group and whole class discussions, guest lectures by activists will contribute to an understanding of the necessary skills for practicing and promoting nonviolent social change. Students will develop projects and presentations that utilize an online nonviolence database.

ANTH 519. Religion, Reconciliation, & Forgiveness. 3 Hours.
This course examines the role of religion, spirituality, reconciliation, apology, and forgiveness in conflict situations, from the individual to the global. Topics include the role of religion in both war and peace. The course has a cross-cultural and inclusive dimension and goes well beyond Christianity to also consider Buddhism, Confusianism, Islam, and other religions. The spiritual dimensions of Gandhian nonviolence are also considered.
ANTH 520. Cultural Transformation: Our History, Our Future. 3 Hours.
The course will explore the significance of Eisele's Partnership-Domination Model and the socio-cultural systems informed by it. The course will focus on the practical application of the partnership approach for promoting peace and human rights across social levels from the family, schools, community, upward to the global level. Consideration will be given to how to transform values, institutions, economics, and politics from domination to partnership.

ANTH 521. Technological Monitoring of Human Rights and Conflicts. 3 Hours.
This class will give students an overview of how humanitarian work intersects with innovation and technological advances. The class will introduce students to how social media, remote sensing technologies/ drones, cell phones, open source, crowd sourcing, Big Data, cloud computing, the Internet, and sensors are all changing how we collect data and interpret the world around us, and how that information is revolutionizing humanitarian and conflict monitoring.

ANTH 532. Villains, Victims, & Vigilantes. 3 Hours.
This course examines ways in which the concepts of “rights” and “justice” are understood and enacted in local communities, particularly in regions of the world experiencing high rates of violent criminality. Beginning with a review of formal law and legal principles underlying state systems of justice, the course surveys settings in which dissatisfaction with state efforts to protect rights have induced communities to develop alternate policing and judicial institutions.

ANTH 587. Special Problems in Peace Research. 3 Hours.
Supervised study of specified topic area in peace studies; defined problem explored in depth. Topics are determined by student and instructor interest.

ANTH 588. Special Problems in Human Rights. 3 Hours.
Supervised study of specified topic area in Human Rights; defined problem explored in depth. Topics are determined by student and instructor interest.

ANTH 601. Forensic Anthropology. 4 Hours.
Forensic Approaches to Osteology Applied human osteology, emphasizing ability to identify age, sex, and population type of skeletal material. Effects of disease and behavior on bones.

ANTH 602. Conquest of Mexico. 3 Hours.
This course examines the Spanish conquest of Mexico from both Spanish and indigenous perspectives. It further surveys the institutionalization of Spanish control over the fallen Aztec Empire and the broader intellectual and material consequences of the conquest.

ANTH 605. Advanced Cultural Anthropology. 3 Hours.
Advanced Cultural Anthropology Critical review of theoretical approaches in cultural anthropology.

ANTH 608. Advanced Linguistic Anthropology. 3 Hours.
Advanced LINGUISTIC Anthropology Historical development of theory and field practice of linguistics; psycholinguistics, sociolinguists, nonverbal communication, semiotics, and ethnosemantics; applied linguistics.

Prerequisites: ANTH 120 [Min Grade: C]

ANTH 609. Advanced Archaeological Anthropology. 3 Hours.
Advanced Archaeological Anthropology Principal theoretical approaches to 19th/20th century archaeology; historical, processual, and post-processual.

ANTH 610. Advanced Biological Anthropology. 3 Hours.
Advanced Biological Anthropology Human evolution, primatology, race, human genetics. Tasks performed by physical anthropologists.

ANTH 611. Field Archaeology. 6 Hours.
Field Archaeology Archaeological field and laboratory techniques, including excavation, surveying, and artifact analysis and description; general problems of archaeological interpretation.

ANTH 613. Human Osteology. 4 Hours.
The identification of human skeletal remains. This laboratory/lecture course provides the groundwork for much of the work in physical anthropology. The first course of the sequence into ANTH 401/601.

ANTH 615. Ethnographic Field Methods. 3-6 Hours.
Ethnographic Field Methods Classroom instruction and practical experience in techniques of ethnographic fieldwork, including participant observation, household surveys, structured and unstructured interviewing, and genealogies.

ANTH 617. Origins of Agriculture. 3 Hours.
Survey of evidence for animal and plant domestication and reasons for spread of food production.

ANTH 619. Food and Culture. 3 Hours.
This course is designed to present a broad view of the role of food in human culture through time and in a variety of geographic settings, offering students and opportunity to reflect on the cultural meanings of food in human life. Class lectures, assigned readings, and films will be used to enhance each student’s understanding of the subject from a cross cultural perspective. We will examine the biological basis of diet how foodways develop and change, how and why anthropologists study diet, and variations in foodways around the world.

ANTH 622. Landscape Archaeology. 3 Hours.
The course will cover the techniques and strategies employed by archaeologists to reconstruct past landscape, which involves scientific testing, remote sensing, GIS, survey, excavation and environmental analysis. Examples will be drawn from projects across diverse landscape types in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Central America and Asia. In-field and laboratory application of techniques will be emphasized.

ANTH 624. The Law of Historical and Cultural Resources. 2 Hours.
This survey course will familiarize students with federal and state laws and regulations relevant to archeology and anthropology, such as the National Historic Preservation Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. It will also introduce them to other legal issues such as obtaining National Register listings, preservation easements and federal income tax rehabilitation credits.

ANTH 625. African-American Archaeology. 3 Hours.
African American Archaeology is one of the better established research interests within U.S. Historical Archaeology. This course will examine the development of the archaeology of the African diaspora from its beginnings in the 1960s to the present day. Its principal focus will be the plantation of the Southern United States. The course will include an examination of history of the plantation economy as well as an exploration of issues currently of interest to archaeologists studying the archaeological record of African American life.

ANTH 628. Comparative Religion. 3 Hours.
Human behavior in relation to the supernatural; religion as a system of social behavior and values; theories of religion.
ANTH 629. Egypt: Arch Field School. 6 Hours.
Two week field school in Egypt. Students will visit Egypt old and
new, including Islamic Cairo, Coptic churches, the pyramids of Giza,
Alexandria, the tombs and temples of Luxor (Valley of the Kings), Aswan
( Abu Simbel), and an archaeological excavation. Experience Egyptian
temple and dance and musical performances.

ANTH 630. Zooarchaeology. 3-6 Hours.
This course includes an introduction to methods and theories of
zooarchaeological research. Practical experience in processing,
identification, and interpretation of animal bone remains from
archaeological sites forms a large part of class time.

ANTH 632. Geographical Information Systems and Anthropology. 3
Hours.
Survey of the use of geographical information systems in the study of
Global, regional, and local socio-cultural patterns.

ANTH 633. Anthropology of Development. 3 Hours.
Effects of Western penetration into indigenous societies and role of
anthropologists in development projects in the Third World.

ANTH 634. Observing the Earth from Space. 3 Hours.
The course will give students the ability to analyze remotely sensed
data from satellite images. Students will learn about the physics and
mathematics behind remote sensing. They will also learn about the
wide range of satellite images and techniques to analyze them via
ERDAS Imagine, ER Mapper and other programs. Applications of remote
sensing to a variety of fields will form a key component of the class.
The course will culminate in a term project involving remote sensing
applications to UAB faculty-led initiatives in health, medicine, geography
and anthropology. There will be a weekly lab component of the course.

ANTH 636. Community Internship. 3-6 Hours.
Application of anthropological approaches to the efforts of a public or
private sector. Institutional approval of both the host institution and the
department of anthropology required before registration.

ANTH 637. Real World Remote Sensing App. 3 Hours.
This course will be offered as a research seminar focusing on real world
applications of remote sensing technology. Students will work closely with
UAB professors and scientists at NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center
in Huntsville doing original remote sensing research on new satellite
datasets. These datasets cover diverse areas including terrorism, global
warming, health, anthropology / archaeology, atmospheric studies, urban
expansion and coastal management. Students will be responsible for
analyzing the satellite imagery and presenting papers to NASA.

ANTH 640. Arch and Hist Bible Lands. 3 Hours.
Archaeology and History of the Bible Lands. Examination of region
spanning modern Syria, Lebanon, Isreal, and Jordan from 10,000-585
BC.

ANTH 641. Anthropology of Human Rights. 3 Hours.
Examination of conceptual, political, and legal aspects of human rights
from an anthropological perspective. Topics considered may include:
state violence; the history of human rights claims; the opposition of
cultural rights and human rights claim; human rights as a form of political
discourse; human rights practices in select contemporary settings.

ANTH 642. Historical Archaeology. 3 Hours.
This course involves all stages of archaeological field work at a historical
archaeology site. Students will learn survey skills, excavation, mapping,
recovery, and post-field analysis techniques.

ANTH 645. Medical Anthropology & Health Disparities. 3 Hours.
This course explores the bio-cultural basis of health and cross-cultural
variation in illness and healing which includes theoretical bases of
medical anthropology, comparative health care systems, and social,
political, and economic issues related to health care delivery.

ANTH 646. Explorers, Mummies and Hieroglyphs. 3 Hours.
This course provides a thematic approach to pharaonic Egypt in general,
with one portion covering diverse aspects such as geography, an
overview of the history of Dynasties 1-31, society and government,
daily religion, mortuary religion, architecture, literature, the military,
trade, economy, and daily life. Another portion of the course provides
several documentaries regarding early to more recent explorers and
Egyptologists. The third focus introduces Egyptian hieroglyphs in eight
grammar classes and follow-up user-friendly, in-class exercises, aiming
to enable students to translate basic hieroglyphic texts.

ANTH 647. Advanced Peace Studies. 3 Hours.
Intensive exploration of concepts and issues involved in the study of
peace, social justice, nonviolence and conflict resolution. Students
will engage in an in-depth examination and critique of anthropological
approaches to peace and the associated theoretical and practical
problems and applications.

ANTH 649. Egyptian History & Arch. 3 Hours.

ANTH 650. Nationalism Ethnicity and Violence. 3 Hours.
Social and cultural analysis of ethnicity and nationalist ideologies
particularly where these have led to violent confrontations within modern
nation-states. Considers primordialist versus constructionist theories of
difference; the varying weight to be attributed to political, historical and
cultural factors in the study of nationalism; and the politics of culture vs
the culture of politics.

ANTH 652. Sustainable Peace Seminar. 3 Hours.
This course will focus on the integration of knowledge related to peace,
justice, ecology, and human rights, or in other words, on the numerous
interrelated aspects of the “positive peace” concept. This course is a
seminar, meaning that participants will engage in much discussion. In
turn, participants will present topics for discussion and others will respond
and engage in dialogue. At times the focus will be on one participant’s
research, and at other times the focus will be on a particular book or set
of readings.

ANTH 653. Primatology. 3 Hours.
Biology, behavior, and distribution of living non-human primates
Emphasis on field studies of old-world monkeys and apes.

ANTH 654. Biological Anthropology and Contemporary Issues. 3
Hours.
This course applies a biological anthropological perspective to explore
what it means to be human and to develop critical perspectives on
our culture, science, and media. How did humanity arrive in its current
position? How do we understand human diversity? What can we learn
from the differences among people, their overwhelming biological
similarity, and their common humanity? How do we use this knowledge to
build a sustainable future for ourselves?.

ANTH 655. Archaeology of Alabama. 3 Hours.
This course will review the archaeology of Alabama from per-European
and historical perspectives. Topics covered may include industrial
archaeology, Native American prehistory, and field work may be included.

ANTH 657. Anthropology of Gender. 3 Hours.
Cultural construction of gender differences in human societies; shifting
definitions of proper male and female roles across cultures and through
time.
ANTH 658. Human Sexuality. 3 Hours.
This course will explore human sexuality and gender from an anthropological perspective, including biological and cultural perspectives, as well as the areas where anthropology meets psychology. The evolution of sexual behavior in humans and in non-human primates will be examined, as well as how sexuality is embedded in socio-cultural context both across and within societies.

ANTH 659. Politics, Drugs and Society in Latin America. 3 Hours.
This course will examine the role of drug production and the drug trade in the economic and political life of Latin American societies. Viewed historically and ethnographically, the course will include coverage of the traditional uses of drugs in indigenous societies as well as the more recent globalization of the industry.

ANTH 660. Ecological Anthropology. 3 Hours.
Examines interactions among behavioral, technological, organizations, and ideological features of human cultures that serve to adapt societies to their physical environment.

ANTH 661. Historical Ecology. 3 Hours.
This course explores the topic of Historical Ecology and examines the relationship between humans and their environments from the perspectives of history, anthropology, archaeology, ecology, and biogeography.

ANTH 664. Political Anthropology. 3 Hours.
The Comparative analysis of political structures and process throughout the world, focusing especially on non-Western forms; a survey of anthropological attempts to understand the complex interplay of culture and power in human societies.

ANTH 665. Classics in Ethnography. 3 Hours.
This course surveys a selection of classic descriptive accounts of human cultures. It is a reading intensive course covering works that helped shape the discipline of anthropology or that are illustrative of particular movements in the history of the discipline.

ANTH 667. Museum Studies. 3 Hours.
This course uses case studies, analysis of topical issues, and problem-based learning exercises to explore the many aspects of museum studies relevant to the administration and management of not-for-profit museums. This course provides an interdisciplinary introduction to museum work.
Prerequisites: ANTH 106 [Min Grade: C]

ANTH 669. Ethnographic Perspectives In Rural Mexico. 3 Hours.
Comparative and historical analysis of rural Mexican communities, emphasizing the impact of recent NAFTA-related economic policies and democratic political reforms.

ANTH 671. Evolution of Human Carnivory. 3 Hours.
In this course, students will use analytical methods from zooarchaeology and taphonomy as well as observation of non-human primates and contemporary hunter-gatherers to investigate the paleoecology of carnivory during the evolutionary history of the human lineage.
Prerequisites: ANTH 102 [Min Grade: C] or ANTH 211 [Min Grade: C] or ANTH 453 [Min Grade: C] or ANTH 694 [Min Grade: C] or ANTH 610 [Min Grade: C]

ANTH 686. Special Problems in Applied Anthropology. 3 Hours.
Supervised study of specified topic area in peace studies; defined problem explored in depth. Topics are determined by student and instructor interest.

ANTH 690. Research Methods. 3 Hours.

ANTH 691. Special Problems in Cultural Anthropology. 1-6 Hour.
Special Problems in Cultural Anthropology Supervised study of specified topic area; defined problem explored in depth. Topics determined by student and instructor interest in cultural anthropology.

ANTH 692. Special Problems in Archaeology. 1-6 Hour.
Special Problems in Archaeology Supervised study of specified topic area; defined problem explored in depth. Topics determined by student and instructor interest in archaeology.

ANTH 693. Special Problems in Linguistics. 1-6 Hour.
Special Problems in Linguistics Supervised study of specified topic area; defined problem explored in depth. Topics determined by student and instructor interest in linguistics.

ANTH 694. Special Problems in Biological Anthropology. 1-6 Hour.
Special Problems in Biological Anthropology Supervised study of specified topic area; defined problem explored in depth. Topics determined by student and instructor interest in special topics in biological anthropology.

ANTH 695. Special Problems in Multimedia Anthropology. 1-6 Hour.
Supervised study of multimedia applications to anthropological topics. Specific problem area addressed to be determined by student and instructor interest.

ANTH 697. Special Topics in Anthropology. 3 Hours.
Topics vary. See class schedule for topic.

ANTH 699. Thesis Research. 1-6 Hour.
Thesis Research Independent development of research project.
Prerequisites: GAC M