

MASTER OF ARTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY, PROFESSIONAL ANTHROPOLOGY SPECIALIZATION, PLAN B



The MA program in Professional Anthropology is targeted towards those looking for non-academic careers in practicing and public anthropology, but it can also provide appropriate skillsets and research experience for entry into a PhD program. This MA focuses on flexible course work adapted to student interests and needs, with particular attention to the acquisition of practical skills via methods training. The degree also provides students with hands-on practical work, culminating in a final project such as a portfolio, exam, or professional paper that is shaped and determined by the advisor, committee, and student. Students are guided by advisors with similar areas of interests. Accepted students work with advisors and committees to plan a 2-year curriculum based on student interests and goals.

This Plan B portfolio degree and particularly the degree's emphasis on research methods courses illustrate the program's emphasis on obtaining a wide range of practical research skills that will better position graduates to obtain employment and to help solve real-world social and environmental problems. Students work with their advisors and committees to plan how to incorporate an experiential learning opportunity (such as an internship) and professional development training appropriate to their career goals.

Students within this specialization choose one of three tracks in: Archaeology, Applied Cultural Anthropology, or Human Evolutionary Biology:

- The Archaeology track prepares graduates for professional roles in public (local, state, federal) and private (non- and for-profit) institutions that work to interpret, conserve, and preserve archaeological heritage. Students will be prepared to apply skills related to archaeological methods and legislation in contemporary work-force situations.
- The Applied Cultural Anthropology track prepares graduates for careers in government, non-governmental organizations, foundations, research in diverse fields (health, environment, technology, development), user experience design and research (tech), conservation, global business, international and community development, education, and other sectors, as well as for future doctoral study.

- The Human Evolutionary Biology track prepares graduates to apply knowledge of human anatomy, physiology, genetics, and evolution in a wide range of real-world settings. Students gain skills useful in health sciences, forensic sciences, public health, as well as in areas such as law enforcement and disaster response. The program also provides strong preparation for those planning to continue into doctoral programs in human biology, forensic anthropology, biomedical sciences, or related fields.

[Students interested in graduate work should refer to the Graduate and Professional Bulletin.](#)

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of anthropological theories and how to apply them appropriately to address and help solve real-world problems.
2. Apply anthropological methods by practicing independent and collaborative research techniques that can be used to address both academic questions and help solve societal challenges.
3. Utilize and learn to assess anthropological and interdisciplinary data collection and analysis methods and in the process improve data literacy.
4. Develop critical thinking and problem solving skills that can be used to solve challenges facing humans and the environment.
5. Demonstrate the academic background and skills needed to enter a PhD program in anthropology or to immediately meaningfully practice a job related to the discipline.

Requirements Effective Fall 2026

Code	Title	Credits
Core Requirements: ¹		
ANTH 500	Development of Anthropological Theory	3
ANTH 695	Independent Study ²	6
Select 3 credits from outside the Anthropology Department ³		3
Select 12 methods credits and 6 elective credits from one of the following three tracks: ⁴		18
Archaeology Track		
Select a minimum of 12 credits of Archaeology methods-focused courses:		
ANTH 352	Geoarchaeology	
ANTH 420	Digital Digging--Geophysics in Archaeology	
ANTH 457	Lithic Technology	
ANTH 458	Archaeology and Cultural Resource Management	
ANTH 465	Zooarchaeology	
ANTH 478/ HIST 478	Heritage Resource Management	
ANTH 541	Seminar in Archaeological Method	
ANTH 544	From Death to Discovery	
ANTH 552	Geoarchaeology	
ANTH 556	Bayesian Chronologies in Archaeology	
ANTH 660	Field Archaeology	

ANTH 674	Research Design and Analysis in Anthropology
GR 420	Spatial Analysis with GIS
GR 503/NR 503	Remote Sensing and Image Analysis
Select a minimum of 6 credits of Archaeology electives:	
ANTH 455	Great Plains Archaeology
ANTH 456	Archaeology and the Public
ANTH 462	Anthropology Curation and Exhibition Methods
ANTH 542	Seminar in Archaeological Theory
ANTH 551	Historical Archaeology
ANTH 617	Place, Space and Adaptation
Applied Cultural Anthropology Track	
Select a minimum of 12 credits of Applied Cultural Anthropology methods-focused courses:	
ANTH 441	Method in Cultural Anthropology
ANTH 442	Ethnographic Field School
ANTH 444	Cultures of Virtual Worlds—Research Methods
ANTH 445	Psychological Anthropology
ANTH 506	Anthropology of Happiness and the Good Life
ANTH 507	Ethnographic Discourse Analysis
ANTH 525	Abolition Methodologies
ANTH 543	Foundations of Ethnographic Research
ANTH 554/ESS 554	Ecological and Social Agent-based Modeling
ANTH 674	Research Design and Analysis in Anthropology
GR 323/NR 323	Remote Sensing and Image Interpretation
GR 420	Spatial Analysis with GIS
GR 503/NR 503	Remote Sensing and Image Analysis
Select a minimum of 6 credits of Applied Cultural Anthropology electives:	
ANTH 316	Climate, Capital, Culture
ANTH 330/CLMT 330	Human Ecology
ANTH 338	Gender and Anthropology
ANTH 340	Medical Anthropology
ANTH 343	Applied Medical Anthropology
ANTH 405	Public Anthropology and Global Challenges
ANTH 414/ETST 414	Development in Indian Country
ANTH 415	Indigenous Ecologies and the Modern World
ANTH 416	Gender, Culture, and Health
ANTH 423	Cultural Psychiatry
ANTH 440	Theory in Cultural Anthropology
ANTH 446	New Orleans and the Caribbean
ANTH 448	Development and Empowerment
ANTH 449	Community Development from the Ground Up
ANTH 520	Women, Health, and Culture
ANTH 521	Gender, Sexuality, and Culture

ANTH 532	The Culture of Disaster
ANTH 538	Food, Hunger, and Culture
ANTH 540	Medical Anthropology
ANTH 548	Theoretical Topics in Cultural Anthropology
ANTH 571	Anthropology and Global Health
ANTH 617	Place, Space and Adaptation
ANTH 679/IE 679	Applications of International Development
Human Evolutionary Biology Track	
Select a minimum of 12 credits of Human Evolutionary Biology methods-focused courses:	
ANTH 372	Human Osteology
ANTH 465	Zooarchaeology
ANTH 470	Paleontology Field School
ANTH 474	Human Skeleton Analysis
ANTH 541	Seminar in Archaeological Method
ANTH 544	From Death to Discovery
ANTH 552	Geoarchaeology
ANTH 674	Research Design and Analysis in Anthropology
BMS 300	Principles of Human Physiology
BMS 575	Human Anatomy Dissection
BZ 360	Bioinformatics and Genomics
GR 420	Spatial Analysis with GIS
SOC 353	Criminal Investigations
Select a minimum of 6 credits of Human Evolutionary Biology electives:	
ANTH 373	Human Evolution
ANTH 472	Human Biology
ANTH 473	The Neandertals
ANTH 530	Human-Environment Interactions
ANTH 570	Contemporary Issues-Biological Anthropology
ANTH 571	Anthropology and Global Health
ANTH 572	Human Origins
ANTH 575	Paleoecology
GR 548	Biogeography
SOC 555	Society, Deviance, and Crime

Program Total Credits: 30

A minimum of 30 credits are required to complete this program.

¹ The Plan B degree does not require a thesis. Instead, students work closely with faculty advisors to determine the shape of an appropriate final project based on students' career goals. We allow for flexibility here, though typical final projects would include either a portfolio, exam, or professional paper. The portfolio typically contains examples of work meant to highlight students' research and applied skills and is defended in front of the student's graduate committee, other faculty, fellow students, and community members. The exam option typically entails students responding to written questions prepared by committee members followed by an oral defense. The professional paper could be modeled on a publishable academic article that meets anthropological subdisciplinary academic standards

² Students work with their advisors and committees to plan how to incorporate an experiential learning opportunity (such as an internship)

and professional development training appropriate to their career goals.

³ Students should consult with advisors for appropriate outside courses.

⁴ Students can count undergraduate credits (300- and 400-level courses) toward this degree. However, according to the Graduate School, a minimum of 18 degree credits must be at the graduate level (500 or above), and we require for this program that at least 15 of those credits be in regular graduate courses. Courses listed in each track constitute a partial list. Other courses may be used with approval of advisor and committee. Methods courses listed in each track may also be taken to fulfill electives requirements, though courses may not fulfill both methods and electives requirements. The credits in this Plan B portfolio degree (30 total credits) and particularly the degree's emphasis on research methods courses illustrate the program's emphasis on obtaining a wide range of practical research skills that will better position graduates to obtain employment and to help solve real-world problems.

Students must complete the minimum number of credits specified in the official program of study as approved by the University Curriculum Committee, and all credit requirements specified in the **Graduate and Professional Bulletin** for their degree.

Requirements for All Graduate Degrees

For more information, please visit Requirements for All Graduate Degrees (<https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/graduate-bulletin/graduate-study/procedures-requirements-all-degrees/>) in the Graduate and Professional Bulletin (<https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/graduate-bulletin/>).

Summary of Procedures for the Master's and Doctoral Degrees

NOTE: Each semester the Graduate School publishes a schedule of deadlines. Deadlines are available on the Graduate School website (<https://graduateschool.colostate.edu/deadline-dates/>). Students should consult this schedule whenever they approach important steps in their careers.

Forms (<https://graduateschool.colostate.edu/forms/>) are available online.

Step	Due Date
1. Application for admission (online)	Six months before first registration
2. Diagnostic examination when required	Before first registration
3. Appointment of advisor	Before first registration
4. Selection of graduate committee	Before the time of fourth regular semester registration
5. Filing of program of study (GS Form 6)	Before the time of fourth regular semester registration
6. Preliminary examination (Ph.D. and PD)	Two terms prior to final examination
7. Report of preliminary examination (GS Form 16) - (Ph.D. and PD)	Within two working days after results are known
8. Changes in committee (GS Form 9A)	When change is made
9. Application for Graduation (GS Form 25)	Refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School Website

9a. Reapplication for Graduation (online)	Failure to graduate requires Reapplication for Graduation (online) for the next time term for which you are applying
10. Submit thesis or dissertation to committee	At least two weeks prior to the examination or at the discretion of the graduate committee
11. Final examination	Refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School Website
12. Report of final examination (GS Form 24)	Within two working days after results are known; refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School website
13. Submit a signed Thesis/ Dissertation Submission Form (GS Form 30) to the Graduate School and Submit the Survey of Earned Doctorates (Ph.D. only) prior to submitting the electronic thesis/ dissertation	Refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School website.
14. Submit the thesis/dissertation electronically	Refer to published deadlines from the Graduate School website
15. Graduation	Ceremony information is available from the Graduate School website