

Anthropology: Requirements

Social Sciences Division

Anthropology is an unusually broad discipline that embraces biological, historical, and cross-cultural study. Anthropology courses at Kenyon reflect these three distinct but interrelated areas.

Biological anthropology studies the complex connections between our biological and cultural existence, investigating how humans have evolved in the past and how we are continuing to evolve in the present. More advanced courses focus on such topics as human skeletal anatomy, human paleontology, the anthropology of food, and human adaptation to changing environmental conditions.

Courses in archaeology allow students to learn about prehistoric peoples of the New World (Aztecs, Maya, Inkas, Moundbuilders, and Puebloans) as well as the Old World (Egypt, Mesopotamia, and European megalith builders). Methods of investigation are also covered. Field study in Honduras provides students with first-hand experience in conducting archaeological and ethnographic research and interpreting results.

In cultural anthropology courses, students can study native North Americans and the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as well as such topics as media, race, ethnomedicine, sexuality and gender, ethnomusicology, politics, and development.

All anthropology courses deal with diversity, helping us to appreciate the varied ways of being human in the past and present and what links all of us despite those differences.

Beginning Studies in Anthropology

A first course in anthropology should be any of the three one-semester introductory courses listed below. Each course combines lecture and discussion and has an enrollment of no more than twenty-five to thirty students.

ANTH 111 Introduction to Biological Anthropology

This is the first course in biological anthropology, required for upper-level work in biological anthropology courses.

ANTH 112 Introduction to Archaeology

This is the first course in archaeology, required for upper-level work in archaeology.

ANTH 113 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

This is the first course in cultural anthropology, required for upper-level work in cultural anthropology.

Having completed an introductory course, students may enroll in any upper-level course in that area of the anthropology program. Alternatively, students may enroll in another introductory course to gain a broader understanding of anthropology. Diversification credit is earned either by

taking an introductory course and an upper-level course in the same area of anthropology or by taking two introductory courses.

The Anthropology Major (minimum of 5 units)

Minimum requirements are described below. Note that all departmental courses are one semester in length (.5 unit each) and that all courses have limited enrollment.

Foundation Courses

An introductory course in each of the three anthropological subdisciplines is required: biological anthropology (ANTH 111); archaeology (ANTH 112); and cultural anthropology (ANTH 113). These courses should be taken as early in the major as practicable and may be taken in any sequence. Upper-level courses in anthropology normally have one of the foundation courses as prerequisite.

Upper-Level Courses

A minimum of six upper-level courses (3 units) is required, including at least one course in each of the three anthropological subdisciplines (biological anthropology, archaeology, and cultural anthropology).

Capstone Course

All departmental majors must enroll in ANTH 465 (History of Anthropological Thought) during the fall semester of their senior year.

Senior Exercise

The Senior Exercise in anthropology consists of a core of common readings, three seminar meetings at which the seniors and all faculty members in anthropology discuss these readings, and an examination in which students write a take-home exam in response to one question from a list provided by the faculty. The topic of the seminar generally requires an integration of three subdisciplines, and readings are frequently from new books that faculty members are exploring for the first time. The goals of this exercise are to place faculty and students together in the roles of expert and colleague, to critique and analyze readings together orally, and to have each student produce a synthetic essay out of this common experience.

Seminar meetings take place during the early months of the fall semester. After these three meetings, the faculty members construct between two and four essay questions, and students select one for the exam. Students have approximately one month to complete the essay and are encouraged to discuss their ideas with faculty members and to utilize additional sources based on either library research or readings from other classes. The essay due date falls just before the Thanksgiving break. Faculty members evaluate the papers and students are notified in writing about their performance in December. Each student's paper is read by at least two members of

the faculty, who also provide written and/or oral comments. Some students may be asked to rewrite the paper at this point.

Faculty members judge student performance not merely on the quality of the essay (clarity, insight, and technical proficiency) but also on participation in the whole process of the exercise itself, especially the timely submission of the essay, as well as thoughtful and active participation in the discussions. Any extensions for completing the Senior Exercise must be approved by the dean for academic advising and support, following the same procedures in place for obtaining an Incomplete for any course.

Honors

The Honors Program in anthropology provides students with the opportunity to conduct significant independent research on a topic of their choice. Typically, a student will propose a research focus in consultation with a member of the faculty who agrees to serve as the project advisor.

Late in the student's junior year or early in the senior year, she or he submits a brief description of the honors project to the department. This synopsis outlines the central question being addressed, what methods will be used in conducting the study, and how the thesis will be organized. All anthropology faculty not on leave at the time of the proposal's submission review the document and decide whether it will be approved or declined based on the proposal's intellectual merit and feasibility as well as the student's past classroom performance, demonstrated motivation in pursuit of excellence, and organizational skills.

After the project is approved, the student builds an honors committee consisting of the advisor and one other faculty member who need not be an anthropologist. The student's senior year is spent conducting the research and writing the honor's thesis, although both processes may well have begun in previous years.

The thesis is read by the two members of the honors committee as well as a third person who is an expert in the field addressed by the thesis but who is not a part of the Kenyon faculty. An oral thesis defense, involving the student and the three readers, takes place near the end of the spring semester. The readers then determine whether to award no honors, Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors to the thesis based on the written document and the student's defense of his/her work. Please consult the description of the anthropology Honors Program available in the departmental office in Palme House or on the Web.

Requirements: GPA 3.33 overall; 3.5 in the major. A student may petition to have these prerequisites waived.

Classes: All students pursuing honors take ANTH 498 during the spring and fall semesters of their senior year.

Due date: Honors theses are due in the anthropology department office on April 1 or the closest Monday after that date. The thesis defense is scheduled for a time after April 1 that is convenient for the student and the readers.

The Anthropology Minor

All minors will include a minimum of 2 units of coursework. No more than half of the courses may be taken at the foundation level (i.e., ANTH 111, 112, 113). Courses will typically be taken from at least two department faculty members. The courses selected for the minor will have a clear and cohesive focus (e.g., a subdiscipline within anthropology or a substantive theme to be examined within the discipline). The specific cluster of courses to be included within the minor will be selected by the student in consultation with a member of the department's faculty, who will serve as advisor. The final selection of courses will be approved by the department chair and subsequently reported to the registrar. Please note that declaration of a minor does not guarantee students a place in any particular courses.

Transfer Credit Policy

Subject to departmental approval, we will accept transfer credit for introductory anthropology courses (cultural, biological, or archaeological, not 4-field introductory anthropology courses) taken at appropriate institutions. If approval is granted, the student will still have to complete 5 units of anthropology at Kenyon.

The department will accept up to 1 unit of credit from approved study-abroad courses to count towards the major. These fill the role of upper-level elective classes.

CROSS-LISTED COURSES

The following course is cross-listed in the anthropology offerings and can satisfy the social science requirement:

MUSC 206 Seminar in Ethnomusicology

COURSES

ANTH 111 Introduction to Biological Anthropology

Credit: 0.5

Biological anthropology studies the biological diversity of our species and the evolutionary history that has led us to our present condition. The course includes: (1) examination of the genetics underlying evolution and the mechanisms by which change occurs; (2) variation and adaptation among living humans; (3) living primate populations as keys to understanding our evolutionary past; and (4) human evolution. This course is designed to expose students to the breadth of biological anthropology and to prepare them for upper-level classes in anthropology and related disciplines. Enrollment limited to first-year students and sophomores.

Instructor: Staff

ANTH 112 Introduction to Archaeology

Credit: 0.5

Today people increasingly live in highly industrialized and urban civilizations. But how long have humans had "civilization"? What is "civilization" and how can it be recognized? This course will address these questions, first, by looking at the basic elements of archaeology and its place in anthropology. Some of the topics we will cover include the history of archaeology, fundamental aspects of fieldwork and analysis, and the prehistoric record from the first humans to the origins of civilization.

Instructor: Staff

ANTH 113 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Credit: 0.5

This course introduces students to the discipline that studies and compares other cultures. Students learn about the main concepts used in anthropology and how anthropologists conduct research, while also discovering how people live in other times and places. Students will learn about theories that provide frameworks for understanding and comparing cultures. Ethnographies--descriptions of life in particular places--give students factual materials with which to apply and critique such theories. Through this introduction to the study of culture in general, and an exposure to specific cultures, students inevitably come to re-examine some of the premises of their own culture.

Instructor: Staff

ANTH 252 Anthropology of Religion

Credit: 0.5

For most people in most times and most places, religion has been central to defining who they are and how they are related to other humans as well as supernatural entities. Given the centrality of religion to such self-understanding, it is no surprise that anthropologists have long been interested in the topic and have adopted a variety of approaches to its study. These range from perspectives that stress the adaptive functions of belief systems to those that examine how concepts of the sacred may figure in political contests or shape behavior through the power of their symbols. In this course we will review how these viewpoints and the varied definitions of religion they imply converge within and inform the study indigenous resistance to colonialism. Belief systems and concepts of the sacred have been, and continue to be, at the core of many of these efforts to deny or ameliorate processes of imperial domination. By examining "religion in action" we will arrive at a vivid sense of how religion is used in power struggles, helps adapt people to changed circumstances, and preserves some local control over peoples' understandings of themselves and their relations to the world in which they live. Prerequisite: ANTH 113 or permission of the instructor.

Instructor: Schortman

ANTH 253 Anthropology of Mass Media

Credit: 0.5

Never before in any period of history have so many people had access to so many mass-mediated images. Yet in spite of this proliferation, anthropology has been a recent newcomer to the study of mass media production, distribution, and consumption as situated human activities. Uniquely suited to enter this discourse, an anthropological approach to mass media transcends the limitations of traditional media scholarship by paying closer attention to the broader social and political contexts in which they are embedded. This course endeavors to develop an anthropological understanding of contemporary forms of cultural communication and reception by analyzing the flow of media images across national borders, and particular emphasis is given to the local impact of media culture in different parts of the world. Students will examine the role of mass media in forging national and ethnic identities, body images, sexuality and gender, and experiences of war and violence. No prerequisites but ANTH 113 is strongly recommended. Offered every two years.

Instructor: Pack

ANTH 254 Beginning Maya Hieroglyphs

Credit: 0.5

Maya hieroglyphic texts from the Classic period (CE 400-900) attract attention due to their beauty and the possibility of learning about Maya history, at least as conveyed in the words of the successful elites. The first half of the course will be devoted to methods of analysis: dating and calendrics, the structure of Maya discourse, phoneticism in the writing system, and basic vocabulary. The second part will consider texts from Yaxchilan, Tikal, Caracol, Uaxactun, Copan, Chichen Itza, and other sites. Topics covered will be the origins and growth of kingship, dynastic succession, warfare, religion, and the role of women among the elite. Prerequisite: ANTH 112 or 113, or permission of the instructor. Course offered when there is sufficient demand.

Instructor: Urban

ANTH 310D Music, Human Rights and Cultural Rights

Credit: 0.5

Music is deeply embedded in many forms of individual and cultural identity. This upper-level seminar examines the relationship of music to notions of cultural rights and human rights. Using case studies from a variety of music cultures, we will explore topics such as music censorship, music and warfare, music and disability, and music and AIDS awareness, among others. Engaging with literature from ethnomusicology, anthropology, and other social sciences we will

explore the following questions: What roles does music and related forms of expressive culture play in notions of human rights? Who owns music? Who has the right to transform music? What are the artistic, political, and economic reasons for these transformations? What are their implications? What constitutes a cultural-rights violation? What role, if any, should regulatory agencies have with regard to monitoring cultural rights? Prerequisites: permission of instructor and any one of ANTH 113, MUSC 102, or MUSC 103.

Instructor: Mendonca

ANTH 320 Anthropology of Food

Credit: 0.5

This course investigates the central role food plays in human biology and culture. We will explore food from an evolutionary perspective, examining nutritional variations in subsistence strategies ranging from foraging to industrial societies. Students will come to understand that food is a cultural construction as we look at the symbolism and utilization of food from a cross-cultural perspective. Finally, utilizing a biocultural perspective, we will combine our understanding of biology and culture to see the effects of social, political, and economic issues on human nutrition. A variety of methods are utilized in nutritional anthropology, ranging from ethnographic techniques to methods in biological anthropology for assessing the impact of nutrition on human biology. Throughout the semester, students will become familiar with the variety of approaches used to study nutritional anthropology. Prerequisite: ANTH 111, 112, or 113, or permission of the instructor. Offered every year.

Instructor: Murphy

ANTH 321 Evolution and Human Evolution

Credit: 0.5

This course examines anatomical, behavioral, and genetic similarities and differences among living primates and humans, and the evidence for human evolution as reconstructed from the fossil record. Living primates will be studied as potential models for early hominin adaptation and behavior. The purpose of the course is to understand anatomical and behavioral adaptations of hominins and other primates both today and in the past, and to situate these adaptations in a larger ecological framework. This upper-level course assumes a basic knowledge of the fossil evidence for human evolution and some background in evolutionary theory. Prerequisites: ANTH 111 or permission of instructor. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Staff

ANTH 323 Bioarchaeology of Sub-Saharan Africa

Credit: 0.5

Africa is a vast continent with an incredibly diverse set of people and cultures. The goal of this course is to demonstrate the complexity and depth of sub-Saharan Africa's past through the exploration of human skeletal and archaeological evidence. Most people are aware that Africa is the birthplace of our species, and we will begin our journey by exploring human origins and technological innovations. Unfortunately, other cultural complexities such as emergence of food production, indigenous states, and the development of long-distance trade are usually attributed only to Egyptian civilization. This course seeks to fill in the missing details of innovation and complexity for the rest of the continent by discussing the evidence for a vast array of societies in sub-Saharan Africa's past. Prerequisites: ANTH 111 or ANTH 112 or permission of instructor. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Staff

ANTH 324 Biocultural Adaptations

Credit: 0.5

Although biological anthropology relies heavily on an evolutionary perspective, it is also concerned with understanding the interactions between human biology and culture. This biocultural perspective seeks to appreciate how humans adapt to their environment through a combination of biological, cultural, and physiological adjustments. We will explore how humans adapt to a wide variety of environmental factors, including high altitudes, climates, nutrition, and disease. The emphasis of the course will be on understanding our biological and cultural responses to stress and the contexts in which these can be adaptive or maladaptive. Prerequisites: ANTH 111, 112, or 113. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Staff

ANTH 325 Human Skeletal Analysis

Credit: 0.5

This course focuses on the application of human skeletal and morphological data to various interpretive problems (descriptive, comparative, and analytic) in biological anthropology. Topics include basic human skeletal and dental anatomy; determination of age, sex, and stature; developmental and pathological anomalies; osteometric methods and techniques; various comparative statistical methods; and problems of ethics, excavation, restoration, and preservation. The course also includes an examination of representative research studies that utilize the above data and methods. Prerequisite: ANTH 111 or permission of instructor. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Murphy

ANTH 327 Narrative Lives

Credit: 0.5

Within anthropology, the life history has long been recognized as an important vehicle for learning about how culture is experienced and created by individuals. This seminar seeks to develop a better understanding of the research method known as life history, and of its attendant beliefs and limitations in diverse social and cultural contexts. The course will also address how categories of difference such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, age, religion, and geographic location are experienced and their relevance to personal identity. Equally important, this is a "learning by doing" course, as it will attempt to bridge theories of self-narrative with cultural anthropological research methods. Students will experience firsthand the theoretical, methodological, and ethical issues involved in collecting life histories. By undertaking individual projects, each student will learn to organize and conduct life history interviews, record them, transcribe them, edit them, and present them in written form. The goal is to explore the multiple stages involved in transforming a narrative life into an inscribed text. Prerequisite: ANTH 113 or permission of instructor. Course offered when there is sufficient demand.

Instructor: Pack

ANTH 330 Archaeological Methods

Credit: 0.5

This course presents some of the major analytical techniques and theoretical approaches archaeologists employ in their efforts to reconstruct past societies. The course briefly considers the historical development of archaeology, and then explores the key concepts that define the discipline. Students will gain an appreciation of (1) the procedures involved in conducting field research, (2) the nature of the material record, (3) the process of archaeological reasoning, (4) the study of various materials, (5) the role of cultural resource management in modern archaeology, and (6) the nature of culture change. The class will consist of lectures and discussion and is always offered in Honduras, but may also be taught at Kenyon. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Staff

ANTH 333 Seeds, Settlements, and Standing Stones: The Neolithic in Western Asia and Europe

Credit: 0.5

This course will primarily focus on the topic of the Neolithic. After reviewing current theoretical views on the beginnings of domestication and sedentism, we will look at the actual evidence from plants, animals, and ecology to assess which theory or theories (if any) best explains this major transition in cultural evolution. Next we will examine early social complexity in Western Asia, focusing on new material from Anatolia. In the third section we will look at the biological and cultural transformations the Neolithic wrought in Europe. Finally, we will look at Neolithic monuments from several perspectives: engineering, social organization, landscape, and ritual. The course will combine lectures, demonstrations, discussions, audio-visual materials, and student presentations. Prerequisite: ANTH 112. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Urban

ANTH 336 Fieldwork in Anthropology

Credit: 0.5

This is a field-based course designed to give practical knowledge of and experience in utilizing the techniques of contemporary anthropology. After initial training in both cultural methods (ANTH 464) and archaeological methods (ANTH 330), students will choose to do research in either cultural anthropology or archaeology. Working closely with the instructors, students develop and carry out individual field projects. In the past, cultural field projects have included such topics as herbal medicine, wood use and conservation, religious choice, and attitudes toward pregnancy. Archaeological topics have included studies of rural households, monumental architecture, figurines, and polychrome ceramics. This course is offered only in Honduras.

Instructor: Schortman, Urban

ANTH 338 Theory and Method in Archaeology: Household Anthropology

Credit: 0.5

Theory and method is a rotating-topics course. Topics covered in recent years have included the following: (1) gender and archaeology (addressing such questions as whether we can see gender in the archaeological record, what methods are best for addressing this topic, and how successful have gender-oriented studies been); (2) settlement analysis (looking at spatial distributions and organizations at small and large scales to determine what can be said about social organization using this data); and (3) household analysis (trying to determine empirically what constitutes a household, what activities took place there, and how households relate to larger political and social institutions). Our emphasis, regardless of topic, is on working with actual data. This course is required for participants in the Kenyon Honduras Program. Students who have not participated in the Kenyon Honduras Program will be furnished with a data set for analysis. Prerequisites: permission of the instructor and ANTH 112. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Schortman, Urban

ANTH 341 Peoples of Mexico

Credit: 0.5

This course will focus on indigenous groups, including the Zapotecs, the Mayas, Nahuatl-speaking groups in central Mexico, and northern groups such as the Coras and Tarahumaras. Utilizing ethnographic materials and films, we will examine such topics as religious syncretism, acculturation, the idea of "Indianness," and identity formation in the modern world. The course is run primarily as a discussion group, and the reading load will be relatively heavy. This course is particularly appropriate for international-studies students concentrating in Latin America, Spanish-studies majors, and anthropology students with an interest in indigenous peoples.

Prerequisites: ANTH 112 or at least one course in another department covering Latin American history or culture. Course offered when there is sufficient demand.

Instructor: Urban

ANTH 342 Peoples and Cultures of Native North America

Credit: 0.5

The primary goal of this course is to separate the public perception and mythology of the "Indian" from the divergent experiences and everyday reality of Native Americans. A thematic approach will be applied to this study, and topics such as history, film, language, spirituality, commercialism, appropriation, subsistence, and sovereignty will be explored in some detail and from a variety of perspectives. Through a survey of various tribal groups, students will analyze some of the major concepts, methods, and theories used in anthropological studies of Native American cultures; assess the impact that stereotypes, biological and cultural interaction with non-Indians, and urbanization have had on Indian identity; and appreciate the richness and complexity of Native American life as it was and continues to be lived in diverse ways and in different places in North America. Offered every third year.

Instructor: Pack

ANTH 343 Contemporary Issues in Native North America

Credit: 0.5

For at least the past two centuries, scientists, politicians, and academics have predicted the imminent and inevitable demise of Native American cultures. Far from crumbling, however, indigenous cultures today are still many, varied, and showing new signs of revitalization. According to the most recent census data, population figures for Native Americans have reached pre-contact levels. However, there are still many challenges confronting indigenous peoples in representing and organizing themselves. This course is framed within the present tense and designed as an advanced exploration of the significant issues affecting American Indians in modern society. Topics to be addressed include repatriation, environmentalism, militancy, the sports mascot controversy, aboriginal media, gaming, and, above all, sovereignty. Sovereignty is perhaps the most significant concern facing Native Americans today, as Indian nations in modern America struggle constantly to preserve their inherent right to exercise self-determination. The objective of the course is to examine the dominant cultural attitudes and conflicting values concerning what and who constitutes a Native American in the United States in the twenty-first century. There are no prerequisites for this course but ANTH 113 is highly recommended. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Pack

ANTH 345 Ethnicity in Central America

Credit: 0.5

Central America is the home of some easily recognizable ethnic groups, such as the Mayas and Kunas, but there are other, less well-known peoples. After considering what ethnicity might or might not be, we will learn about a number of groups: Mayas, Garifunas, suppressed Native American groups in El Salvador and Nicaragua, Black Creoles, and immigrants from the Levant who are known as Arabes. Studying these groups will help us understand the hidden ethnic tensions sometimes cloaked by national assertions of mestizo identity. Prerequisite: ANTH 113 and permission of the instructor. Offered every other year.

Instructor: Staff

ANTH 346 Women In Latin-American Culture

Credit: 0.5

What happens to women's roles in traditional societies undergoing modernization? Is life better for women in cities or rural areas? Are the benefits of development and industrialization felt equally by all members of a family? How and why do women become involved in revolutionary movements? These and other questions will be examined as this course looks at women's lives in contemporary Latin America. Case studies will be drawn from Central and South America.