

PROGRAMS AND POLICIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

(Revised November 2003)

The graduate program of the Anthropology Department of the University of Florida has produced excellent scholars from the United States and around the world. Florida anthropology graduates have developed successful careers in academic, public and private spheres based on the knowledge they have gained, the colleagues they have met among students and faculty, and the problem-based focus and expertise of the department. The purpose of the Programs and Policies is to ensure that each graduate student in the program enjoys the highest caliber education and training that the department has to offer.

The Department of Anthropology defines itself as a four-field department—meaning that the four traditional sub-disciplines of anthropology—**socio-cultural anthropology, archaeology, biological anthropology and linguistics**—are all represented among the departmental faculty. In addition, the department has historically emphasized **applied anthropology** as a specialty within one of the four traditional fields. UF Anthropology graduate students are expected to demonstrate an interest in more than one field or sub-discipline of anthropology.

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1. Introduction.

The fundamental document that guides graduate programs at the University of Florida is the Graduate Catalog published by the Graduate School, which is periodically revised at that level. The present document, Programs and Policies of the Department of Anthropology, is supplemental and subordinate to the Graduate Catalog and to whatever intermediary or interpretative policies are implemented by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. An entering graduate student is bound by those specific policies that were in effect at the 1) Graduate School, 2) college, and 3) department level when the student **first entered** the graduate program.

Students entering the graduate program should read their **catalog of entry** before reading the present document, because there is much more information there regarding the mechanics of the Graduate School and the University policies and procedures. This document focuses on the special and specific rules and guidelines of the Anthropology Department, which are in addition to the University's and are different from the rules and guidelines of other departments.

2. Structure of the Department Graduate Program.

The Chair of the Department of Anthropology delegates some or all of the responsibilities for administering the graduate program to a faculty member designated as the **Graduate Coordinator**, selected by the Chair. To assist the Graduate Coordinator, the Chair appoints three or more additional faculty members to serve on the **Graduate Committee**. These members are individually given special responsibilities for admissions, financial aid awards, and teaching assistantships.

A member of the Department staff, the **Graduate Program Assistant**, is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the graduate program, especially keeping records of student admission and progress through the program. The Graduate Program Assistant coordinates on a

regular basis with the Graduate Coordinator, Graduate Committee, and Office Manager, but reports administratively to the Department Chair.

3. Supervisory Committees.

a. Definition and Purpose.

The supervisory committee, composed of a chair and members, takes the central role in deciding what courses the student should take to fulfill a particular specialization or regional interest. The supervisory committee also administers exams and approves theses and dissertations.

b. Forming a Supervisory Committee.

The student is responsible for forming a supervisory committee and maintaining its membership at the level required by the Graduate Catalog. The foremost criterion for selecting committee members should be the extent to which they can enhance the student's preparation to complete a particular specialization and course of study. Further specific membership criteria are stated below and in **Section 4: Choosing a Track**. Before arrival on campus, each student is informed of faculty who have helped sponsor their admission, and who are willing to chair or to serve on the student's supervisory committee. Preferably before the arrival for the first semester of study, and certainly within the first month of residence, students should contact those individuals and then select a preliminary advisor who may later become the chair of their supervisory committee.

The chair of the supervisory committee must be selected by the end of the first term. This is relayed to the Department by the completion of sections 1 and 2 of the *Departmental Record of Committee Activity* form on the Anthropology web-site that is then submitted to the Graduate Program Assistant. Subsequently, the student, in consultation with that chair, selects other members of the committee in accordance with the requirements of the Graduate Catalog

and the student's interests and specialization. The student will formally ask the faculty members suggested to serve on the supervisory committee and obtain their official willingness to serve. Faculty may decline to serve on any committee, without stating a reason. Please note: A faculty member from another department whose PhD degree is in anthropology may not serve as an interdisciplinary member of the student's committee [see **Section 4: Choosing a Track**].

The Graduate Coordinator and/or Chair of the Department will review the composition of each committee to make sure that it is in conformance with the rules of the Graduate School, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and departmental policies.¹ All committees must be approved formally by the Dean of the Graduate School, who serves *ex officio* on all student supervisory committees.

c. General Responsibilities of the Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee must meet before the end of the student's second semester of enrollment to outline a course of study toward a degree, and specify in general what courses should be taken. A memo containing this information will be written by the supervisory committee chair to the Graduate Coordinator, and a copy inserted in the student's permanent file. The chair should also distribute copies to each member of the supervisory committee.

If special permissions are required to take graduate or undergraduate courses in other departments for credit, or other specialized training, the chair of the committee initiates a letter requesting such arrangements. This letter is then endorsed by the Department Chair and/or Graduate Coordinator, and sent forward to the College and the Graduate School for approval.

The Chair of the Supervisory Committee is also responsible for the annual evaluation of the student (see Section 6).

d. Changing Committee Membership

As a student's interests change, committee membership may have to be revised. Professional courtesy requires that students first review any proposed changes with the chair of their supervisory committee, and then speak personally with any committee members to be added or deleted. If students wish to change the chair of their supervisory committee, it should be approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

4. Choosing a Track.

All graduate students must choose between a **general anthropology track** or the **interdisciplinary track**. The general anthropology track is recommended for those whose goal is to teach at the college level, while the interdisciplinary track might be more appropriate for those seeking a professional career outside the academy.

For the purposes of administering the graduate program, it is assumed that each faculty member is primarily associated with only one field of anthropology, among **socio-cultural anthropology, archaeology, biological anthropology** and **linguistics**. A graduate student taking the general anthropology track must specify a major field of specialty among the four fields, and take at least one course in each of the other three fields. Please note: Applied anthropology does not constitute a field of study for satisfying distribution requirements (see below). Students on the interdisciplinary track must specify a major field of interest in anthropology, and take at least one (for the MA) or two (for the PhD) anthropology course(s) outside that field. The interdisciplinary student must also select a discipline or program outside the anthropology department, and take at least 9 credits from that department or program for the MA degree or 18 credits for the Ph.D. A faculty member from that department or program must sit on the

¹ In practice, either the Graduate Coordinator or the Department Chair can approve such matters, but the two usually confer if they are both available.

student's supervisory committee (as the "interdisciplinary member"; see Section 3b). Courses in other departments taught by anthropologists do not count for the interdisciplinary track².

5. General Course Information.

All students must take the mandatory theory and professional courses, **Pro-Seminar in Cultural and Linguistic Anthropology and Pro-Seminar in Biological and Archaeological Anthropology**, during the first two semesters on campus. This course sequence does not fulfill any distribution requirements for the general anthropology or interdisciplinary tracks. All archaeology students must also take the graduate level Archaeological Theory course.

Please note: The department does not count language courses towards the total number of credits needed for the degree. Courses of this type are not required by the department, but may be required by the supervisory committee.

6. Evaluation of Students for Satisfactory Progress

Each year students are evaluated to determine whether they are making satisfactory progress towards their degree. The evaluation is completed by the chair of the supervisory committee after consulting with students about their accomplishments and future plans each spring. The supervisory committee chair writes a letter to the Graduate Coordinator stating whether the student is making satisfactory progress in these areas: I. Course work: including maintaining a 3.0 GPA (3.5 for Anthropology coursework); limiting the number of incomplete grades to only 1; taking an adequate number of courses. II. Supervisory committee composition and meetings: Students are expected to create a supervisory committee, and to arrange meetings with that committee at least once each year. III. Progress towards the degree: making progress towards defining their research interests and funding opportunities; fulfilling degree

² Exceptions are restricted to cases where the faculty member in question petitions the graduate coordinator to have the course count toward credit in a different defined discipline. Once such petition is approved, that course cannot be counted for anthropology credit by any student.

requirements, completing comprehensive and qualifying exams, undertaking field research and specialized training, etc. IV. Professional development: Students are expected to develop papers for presentation at national and international meetings as well as publish their work during their graduate career.

If a lack of progress is indicated on the evaluation, the supervisory committee chair should indicate what actions must be taken by the student and the deadline for completing those actions (e.g., within one semester) to avoid sanctions. Continued failure to meet criteria for satisfactory progress may result in suspension of fellowship and assistantship support as specified by the Graduate School, and dismissal from the graduate program.

If students cannot form and maintain a supervisory committee under the guidelines stated in the Graduate Catalog, they are deemed to be making unsatisfactory progress and their enrollment in the program can be terminated by the Chair of the Department, with the concurrence of the Chair of the Supervisory Committee and the Graduate Coordinator.

7. Master's Degree.

Students admitted into the department with a bachelor's degree in any subject are considered initially to be candidates for a master's degree in anthropology. For MA candidates, credit counted for graduate courses taken elsewhere or when an undergraduate or post-baccalaureate student at UF, can be approved up to a limit set by the Graduate School. These courses can be credited toward a master's degree if a written petition is submitted by the student's supervisory committee chair, and is approved successively by the Graduate Coordinator and/or Chair of the Department, the College, and the Graduate School.

An MA candidate, with the approval of their supervisory committee, can choose to complete the MA requirement either with or without writing a thesis, with total credits specified by the Graduate Catalog.

a. Thesis Option

Students choosing to write a thesis must defend the thesis orally (usually referred to as a “defense” or a “final examination”) and may be required by their committee to take a written comprehensive examination in addition to completing the thesis. If the written exam is administered, questions tailored to the student’s interests and specializations are answered in writing by the candidate, and graded by their committee, with the timing and format of the examination agreed between the student and the committee.

b. Non-Thesis Option

Students choosing the non-thesis option must submit for approval a “publishable paper” (i.e. a paper of publishable quality as determined by the committee) for consideration by the supervisory committee. Students choosing the non-thesis option must pass a final comprehensive examination after completing the coursework. Questions tailored to the student’s interests and specializations are answered in writing by the candidate, and graded by their committee (pass/fail), with the timing and format of the examination agreed between the student and the committee.

c. Format of Written Comprehensive Exam

When formatting the written comprehensive exam, all of the supervisory committee, working with the student, must agree about how long a student may take in answering each question, or choosing from a list of questions, and whether the student can have access to notes, books or the library. The comprehensive examination will normally be taken during the academic year (Fall and/or Spring semesters). In practice, some students answer a question per day for four days in two-hour sessions without access to outside resources, while others can take a week for each question, with access to notes and the library. The most common practice is the “weekend” format where the student picks up the exam at an agreed upon time on Friday and

returns the exam at a scheduled time on Monday morning. Please refer to the Graduate Catalog for more information.

8. Certification for the PhD Degree

Students do not automatically become candidates for a PhD degree. They must be **certified** into the PhD program by their supervisory committee.

a. Certification upon completion of the MA

This process should occur during the semester that the student is graduating with the MA. Certification requires the submission of a letter from the committee chair to the Graduate Coordinator, signed by all members of the committee, stating that the candidate is qualified to continue for a doctorate. If the chair or any committee member declines to sign the letter, the student cannot be certified. The letter must be accompanied by a graduate transcript, and other materials may be included, such as a thesis, the publishable paper of a non-thesis MA candidate, term papers and other materials at the option of the committee chair. Students declined for certification may not enroll for coursework beyond the courses required to complete the MA degree.

b. Certification Bypassing the MA

An outstanding student can be certified as a PhD candidate after the completion of at least 18 units of credit in the department, by the unanimous recommendation of the supervisory committee, that is relayed in writing and must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator and Department Chair. Such students bypass the MA degree [and its requirements of a thesis or publishable paper, oral defense, and written exam] and works directly on a PhD. Students certified for a PhD who do not have a master's degree can apply the graduate courses they have completed toward the doctorate. Students taking this route should remember, however, that the

MA degree is required to serve as an Instructor in the Department, and at other colleges and universities in the area.

9. PhD Degree.

a. Transfer of Credit

Students entering the graduate program with a master's degree in anthropology may be admitted directly into the PhD program. Students entering with a master's degree in a related field may be certified for the Ph.D. program upon entry (once the supervisory committee is convened), or at any time thereafter at the committee's discretion. In addition, at the supervisory committee chair's request, they may petition for transfer of 30 units of credit toward the PhD, which currently requires 90 units of credit altogether. Courses taken outside the department must be evaluated by the Graduate Coordinator before credit is granted.

b. Forming a Supervisory Committee and Choosing a Track

PhD students must form their supervisory committee by the end of their second semester in the program. This committee is larger than an MA committee, as provided in the Graduate Catalog. As in the MA program, a doctoral candidate must declare a field of specialization, and opt for a **general anthropology track** or **interdisciplinary track** (see Section 4). For the PhD, students on the general track must have at least one course in all four fields of anthropology; students on the interdisciplinary track must have at least one course in three of the four fields. Students on the general anthropology track must select three areas of specialization within anthropology, on which they will be tested by their committee at a later date. The membership of the committee should reflect the three areas of concentration chosen by the student. It is recommended that one of the three areas of concentration be a region of the world, while others may be a concentration in theory or methodology.

Students selecting an interdisciplinary track at the doctoral level should take at least 18 credits from the outside program or department. That department should be represented by at least one person on the supervisory committee who is not an anthropologist by training. Like the students on the general anthropology track, students on the interdisciplinary track must select three areas of specialization. At least one should be from anthropology and one from the outside program or department, and it is recommended that the third should be a region where the candidate will conduct research.

For students on both the general and interdisciplinary tracks, the committee can require specialization in more than three areas if appropriate. The committee may also require that the student gain facility in at least one appropriate foreign language.

c. Qualifying Exam

When the student has finished most of their coursework, and has developed a plan for dissertation fieldwork that has been approved by all members of the supervisory committee, the committee administers a **qualifying examination** consisting of both written and oral components. The length and timing of the written portion of the exam are agreed between the student and their committee. The student must also orally defend the written answers submitted for the exam. An oral defense is organized no sooner than two weeks and no later than 60 days after the exam, where the student both defends the answers submitted, and also defends the dissertation research proposal. Both portions of the qualifying examination will normally be taken during the academic year (i.e., Fall and/or Spring semesters). After the student passes the qualifying exam and the supervisory committee has approved the plan for dissertation fieldwork, a student may use the informal appellation **ABD**, “all but dissertation.”

d. Dissertation

The department also requires each student, whether on the general anthropology or interdisciplinary track, to accomplish **field or laboratory research** to acquire primary data for a dissertation. The extent of the dissertation is to be determined by the supervisory committee in conjunction with the student. Dissertations must present original research that increases the scope of knowledge for the discipline of anthropology. The length and format must be in accordance with the Graduate Catalog. The dissertation must be defended orally, between 30-60 days after the submission to the supervisory committee. Any member of the anthropology faculty may attend the defense and question the candidate. Other graduate students are encouraged to attend.

10. Petitions for Exceptions and Grievances.

The rules, policies and procedures described here originated at the department level, except where noted, and can be modified at that level. It is not possible to anticipate all of the special problems and conditions that must be considered for an academic program with students who bring with them a variety of backgrounds from all over the world. Students may petition for special consideration or exemption from any rules that impede the student's progress in the program, when the circumstances are appropriate. Such petitions begin with a request from the student to the chair of the supervisory committee. If the chair agrees with the petition, they write a letter of endorsement to the Graduate Coordinator, who in turn makes a recommendation to the Chair of the Department. For some recurring problems, the Chair has delegated the power of approval to the Graduate Coordinator. All final decisions regarding exceptions rest with the Department Chair.