

# Anthropology

Social Sciences Division

## Faculty

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Anthropology is an unusually broad discipline that embraces biological, historical, and cross-cultural study. Anthropology courses at Kenyon reflect these three distinct but inter-related 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, primate behavior, 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 linguistics.

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 four 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. Look for the ♦ symbol, designating courses most appropriate for first-year students or upperclass students new to the anthropology curriculum.

### 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. All 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 students and faculty 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.

**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, feasibility, 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 both members of the honors committee as well as a third person who is an expert in the field dealt with in the thesis but 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 page at [www.kenyon.edu/x11218.xml](http://www.kenyon.edu/x11218.xml).

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.

**First-Semester Courses****Introduction to Biological Anthropology**

◆ ANTH 111 (.5 unit)  
Hardy

Biological anthropology is the study of the biological diversity of our species and the evolutionary history that has led us to our present condition. The course will include: (1) the 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.

### **Introduction to Archaeology**

◆ ANTH 112 (.5 unit)  
Schortman, Urban

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.

We will begin the chronological sequence with the Old Stone Age, or Paleolithic, a long period during which basic human cultural practices and beliefs became established. Our next topic is the development of agriculture and settled life around the globe, innovations that permitted the growth of complex social organizations that culminated in civilization and the state. In the latter part of the course, we will study the first, or ‘pristine,’ civilizations, focusing on Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, and the Indus Valley. The course concludes with a survey of development in North, Central, and South America, including the Maya, Aztec, and Inka.

### **Introduction to Cultural Anthropology**

◆ ANTH 113 (.5 unit)  
Mendonca, Pack, Suggs

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 reexamine some of the premises of their own culture. Note: Section 03 uses ethnographies almost exclusively about Asia and also counts as an Asian studies course.

### **Anthropology of Food**

ANTH 220 (.5 unit)  
Hardy

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. Permission of the instructor. Enrollment limited.

### **Human Osteology and Forensic Anthropology**

ANTH 325 (.5 unit)  
Murphy

This course focuses on the application of human skeletal and morphological data to various interpretive problems (descriptive, comparative, and analytic) in physical and forensic anthropology. Topics include: basic human skeletal and dental anatomy; determination of age, sex, and stature; developmental and pathological anomalies; anthropometric methods

and techniques; various comparative statistical methods; and problems of 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. Enrollment limited.

### **Old World Archaeology**

ANTH 333 (.5 unit)  
Urban

This semester the course will center 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 explain 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, audiovisual materials, and student presentations. Prerequisite: ANTH 112.

### **Human Sexuality and Culture**

ANTH 350 (.5 unit)  
Suggs

In popular thought, sex is about “the birds and the bees” and “doing what comes naturally.” Yet anthropology teaches us that for human beings the natural is the cultural. Based on that premise, this course looks for cultural patterns in sexual belief and behavior. We begin with an examination of the evolution of sexuality. Is sexuality or sexual behavior expressed the same way by all peoples? Why do humans avoid incest? To what extent are gender roles biologically determined? Are sexually transmitted diseases primarily biological or social problems? How do sexual norms reflect sociocultural adaptations? These are just some of the questions we will confront in this course as we examine the functional

and structural significance of sexual behaviors in the sociocultural milieu. Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor. Enrollment limited.

**Special Topic: Bianthropology of Modern Humans**

ANTH 391.01  
Murphy

Bioanthropology includes the study of the adaptation and evolution of the human species, but it is not restricted to issues of human origins. This course focuses on the biological anthropology of living and recent human populations, including human adaptation to varied environments, the physiological and cultural responses to these environments, the physical growth and development of humans during childhood and adolescence, and the cultural and behavioral factors that influence human growth and development. The human adaptability section of the course will include examination of biological and cultural responses to extreme environments (including cold, heat, and high altitude) as well as varied ecological settings (including arid, tropical rainforest, and grassland). Studies of human growth and development will emphasize the methods of anthropometry as tools to analyze the overall health and nutritional status of modern populations. By examining the human biology of living populations, we will gain a deeper understanding of the biological and cultural factors affecting the health and survival of human groups around the world.

**Special Topic: Contemporary Issues**

ANTH 391.02 (.5 unit)  
Pack

For at least the past two centuries, scientists, politicians, and academics have predicted the imminent and inevitable demise of Native American cultures. Rather than crumbling, 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 about what and who constitute a Native American in the United States in the twenty-first century.

**History of Anthropological Thought**

ANTH 465 (.5 unit)  
Schortman

Beginning with the Age of Discovery, developing through the periods of conquest and colonization, and continuing into the present, anthropology has embodied as well as defined the Western world's experience with "other" peoples and cultures. Within this broad historical context, this course investigates the emergence and definition of anthropology as a discipline by focusing on (1) significant theoretical issues and schools of thought (e.g., evolutionism, functionalism, materialism, and structuralism); (2) biographical and intellectual portraits of several major figures who were instrumental in formulating these issues; and (3) continuing controversies in the elucidation of certain fundamental principles (e.g., culture, relativism, and "the primitive"). Prerequisites: at least three courses in anthropology.

**Individual Study**

ANTH 493 (.5 unit)  
Staff

This course is for students who wish to do advanced work beyond regular courses or to study topics not

included in course offerings. Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.

**Senior Honors**

ANTH 497 (.5 unit)  
Staff

This course is for students pursuing departmental honors. Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.

**Second-Semester Courses**

**Introduction to Biological Anthropology**

◆ ANTH 111 (.5 unit)  
Murphy

See first-semester course description.

**Introduction to Cultural Anthropology**

◆ ANTH 113 (.5 unit)  
Pack, Suggs

See first-semester course description.

**Evolution and Human Evolution**

ANTH 321 (.5 unit)  
Hardy

This upper-level course assumes a basic knowledge of the fossil evidence for human evolution and some background in evolutionary theory. The 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. Prerequisites: ANTH 111 or permission of instructor.

**Narrative Lives**

ANTH 327 (.5 unit)  
Pack

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 its attendant beliefs and limitations in diverse social and cultural contexts. Additional emphasis will 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 first-hand 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, to transcribe them, edit them, and present them in written form. In the process, 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.

### **Archaeological Methods**

ANTH 330 (.5 unit)  
Schortman, Urban

This course is a survey of some of the major analytical techniques and theoretical approaches archaeologists employ in their effort 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 only offered in Honduras.

### **Fieldwork in Anthropology**

ANTH 336 (.5 unit)  
Schortman, Urban

This is a field-based course designed to give practical knowledge in utiliz-

ing 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 will 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 only offered in Honduras.

### **Ethnicity in Central America**

ANTH 345 (.5 unit)  
Schortman, Urban

Central America is the home of some easily recognizable ethnic groups, such as the Mayas and Kunas, but are there 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 milieu in which we live, as well as the hidden ethnic tensions sometimes cloaked by national assertions of mestizo identity. This course is only offered in Honduras.

### **Methods in Cultural Anthropology**

ANTH 464 (.5 unit)  
Pack, Schortman, Urban

This course will provide hands-on experience with some research methods that cultural anthropologists use. Participant observation, interviews, and note-taking are standard methods, and we will consider how to organize and access qualitative data through electronic data-base management. There will be some attention to quantitative methods as well, including statistical inference based on methods such as unobtru-

sive observation or survey questionnaires. The difficulties of designing a good questionnaire and of becoming a perceptive interviewer or observer are best learned through practice. Students will be required to carry out a research project, from literature search and project design, to writing and possibly publishing the results. Only by actually attempting primary research ourselves do we realize just how difficult it is to make statements about human ideas and behaviors that stand up to scientific scrutiny. It is only through such research, however, that we can contribute to knowledge. The section taught by Urban and Schortman (ANTH 464.01) is only offered in Honduras.

### **Ethnomedicine: Africa**

ANTH 471 (.5 unit)  
Suggs

Popular culture tells us that Western biomedical science is the only true and beneficial medical approach in the world. It suggests that traditional medical systems are based only on superstitious nonsense. While anthropological studies of medical systems show them to be different from biomedicine in a number of ways, traditional systems are not solely superstitious; neither are they completely without efficacy. This course surveys some of the many human systematic responses to illness and disease, focusing on African ethnographies. It examines beliefs with regard to etiology (causation), taxonomy (classification), and nosology (diagnosis). The course seeks to demonstrate how culture patterns illness behavior and points to the internal rationality in human responses to disease. Ultimately, it shows that all medical systems (including biomedicine) are first cultural systems, ones that universally medicalize sociomoral problems and sociomoralize medical ones. Prerequisite: ANTH 113 and permission of the instructor. Enrollment limited.

### **Individual Study**

ANTH 494 (.5 unit)  
Staff

This course is for students who wish to do advanced work beyond

regular courses or to study topics not included in course offerings. Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.

### **Senior Honors**

ANTH 498 (.5 unit)  
Staff

This course is for students pursuing departmental honors. Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.

### **The following may be offered in 2008-09:**

- ANTH 111 Introduction to Biological Anthropology
- ANTH 112 Introduction to Archaeology
- ANTH 113 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- ANTH 243 Peoples and Cultures of Sub-Saharan Africa
- ANTH 244 Cultures of Southeast Asia
- ANTH 324 Biocultural Adaptations
- ANTH 325 Human Skeletal Analysis
- ANTH 332 Survey of Mesoamerican Prehistory
- ANTH 338 Theory and Method: Household Archaeology
- ANTH 348 South American Archaeology
- ANTH 350 Human Sexuality and Culture
- ANTH 351 Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective
- ANTH 353 Psychological Anthropology
- ANTH 362 Contemporary Anthropology: Field Data
- ANTH 392.01 Culture and Disease
- ANTH 392.03 Bioarchaeology of Sub-Saharan Africa
- ANTH 465 History of Anthropological Thought
- ANTH 469 Topics in Mesoamerican Anthropology
- ANTH 471 Ethnomedicine
- ANTH 474 Drinking Culture: The Anthropology of Alcohol Use