The Program

The Department of Anthropology offers an M.A., a joint M.A. in Anthropology and Women’s Studies, and a Ph.D. degree in Anthropology. We admit only a small number of students each year in order to maintain our character as a department in which students and faculty are closely associated and to ensure as high a level of financial support as possible. Graduate training is based on core courses in anthropological theory, method, and history, and elective courses in the student’s area of interest.

Areas of faculty specialization include archaeology, economic anthropology and development, urban anthropology, sociolinguistics, symbolic and semiotic studies, cognitive and psychological anthropology, medical anthropology, gender, trans-nationalism, evolution of complex societies, and theory and method in anthropology. Members of the department have carried out fieldwork in Africa, the Caribbean, India, Mesoamerica, Oceania, South America, and the United States. There is a strong interest among all faculty members in the relationship between evidence and interpretation in the social sciences. All faculty share a fundamental orientation to the analysis of sociocultural systems, whatever the particular sources of information or subdisciplinary perspectives.

Among the special resources available to graduate students of anthropology at Brandeis are the University’s participation in a cross-registration program with Boston College, Boston University, and Tufts University. Students with an interest in archaeology may also take courses offered through the Center for Materials Research in Archaeology and Ethnology, a consortium comprised of faculty from six Boston-area universities, including Brandeis, and the Museum of Fine Arts. Students interested in gender and women’s studies may enroll in interdisciplinary courses offered through the Radcliffe Consortium. The Anthropology Department at Brandeis runs a year-long anthropology colloquium series as well as a program of distinguished lectureships. On campus there are archaeology laboratory and computer facilities for graduate student use.

This booklet presents the Anthropology department’s requirements and procedures with respect to its graduate programs. These requirements are subject to revision. For information about the University regulations, course offerings, and the academic calendar, please consult the Brandeis University Bulletin.
Master of Arts

Our M.A. program is designed for those who seek certification at the first level of professional training in anthropology. Admission is limited to students whose primary interests lie within the subfields of social/cultural anthropology, linguistic anthropology, and archaeology.

Candidates for the Master of Arts Degree in Anthropology must satisfactorily complete the Graduate School residence requirement of one full year of course work. Course requirements include a two semester foundational sequence in anthropological theory and history as well as six elective courses designed around the student’s anthropological interests. Students may work at a full-time rate of four courses per semester or at a part-time rate of one or two courses per semester.

Students must also submit an acceptable master’s research paper, evaluated by their advisor and an additional faculty member. There is no foreign language requirement. Some partial tuition scholarships may be awarded to particularly promising entering students who demonstrate financial need.

Joint M.A. Degree in Anthropology and Women’s Studies

Candidates for the Joint Degree of Master of Arts in Anthropology and Women’s Studies must satisfactorily complete the Graduate School Residence requirement of one full year of course work. Course requirements include a two semester foundational sequence in anthropological theory and history, a course in “The Anthropology of Gender”, an additional foundational course in woman’s studies, two elective graduate courses in women’s studies (at least one of which must be from a field other than anthropology), and two additional elective graduate courses in anthropology. Students must also submit an acceptable master’s research paper, evaluated by their advisor and an additional faculty member. They must also attend the year-long, non-credit Women’s Studies Colloquium Series. There is no foreign language requirement.

Doctor of Philosophy

Students may apply for admission directly to the doctoral program in anthropology. Preference will be given to those with an undergraduate background in anthropology or in sociology-anthropology. In any case, applicants to the doctoral program must demonstrate that their anthropological interests are
well-defined and that these interests are congruent with and acceptable to those of the Brandeis anthropology department faculty.

Flexibility in the curriculum allows doctoral students to organize a program of study around their particular anthropological interests. At the same time, the program is structured so that a broad familiarity with the anthropological discipline is achieved. Students entering through the Brandeis master of arts program will have already completed the two foundational courses in anthropology, ANTH 190a and ANTH 193b. All others must complete these two core courses during their first year of residence. These courses emphasize epistemological issues in cross-cultural research and the relationship between scientific and humanistic modes of inquiry. Additional courses may be required as determined by the student’s advisory committee. From their courses and outside reading, students must obtain a high level of competence in a specific topical field of anthropological research and in at least one culture area.

Candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology will work closely with an advisory committee consisting of two department faculty members, one of whom, the principal advisor, is in a field of specialization related to the interest of the student. The advisory committee has the following responsibilities: 1) to aid the student in constructing a coherent program of course work leading to a high level of competency in one or more areas of anthropological theory and methodology 2) to ensure that the courses selected include exposure to other areas within the discipline; 3) to ensure that a component of interdisciplinary study is also included; and 4) to make certain that the student is knowledgeable in the anthropology of one or more of the world’s culture areas.

There is a three year residency requirement for all doctoral students in the Graduate School. After two years of coursework, students take a general examination that tests their overall mastery of anthropological history, theory, and methodology. In subsequent years they study independently in their area of specialization, complete additional coursework, including reading courses, if needed, write a specialist essay, prepare a dissertation prospectus, and apply for dissertation research grants. A reading knowledge of at least one foreign research language must be demonstrated during the period of residency by written examination and, at some point prior to graduation, by the submission of a research paper (such as a course paper) or doctoral dissertation in which sources in the selected language contribute to the research. In addition to the above requirements, those students receiving fellowship support will be expected to serve as teaching assistants each semester during their years of funding.
After completing all degree requirements except for the dissertation, students are normally involved in fieldwork and/or data gathering, followed by the writing of a dissertation. The completed doctoral dissertation must be successfully defended in an oral examination, as required by University regulation, before it can be formally accepted. At that point the department will recommend to the Dean of Arts and Sciences that the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology be awarded to the candidate.

Students should note that all Ph.D. degree requirements must be completed in a timely fashion. The Graduate School requires that students entering with no previous graduate work earn the degree within eight years and students with credit for a year’s graduate work elsewhere in seven.

**Admission**

It is desirable for all applicants to have a background in anthropology, but persons without prior training will be considered for admission if they demonstrate a serious interest in anthropology. Prospective students are encouraged to arrange for a personal interview, but this is not required for admission.

Admissions procedures and an application are available in the Brandeis University Guide to Graduate Admissions. For application materials contact:

Brandeis University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
PO Box 9110/MS 31
Waltham, MA 02454-9110
PH: 781-736-3410
www.brandeis.edu/gsas

We recommend that all applicants submit an official score report from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). A writing sample is suggested for Ph.D. applicants. Contact the Educational Testing Service for specific information on GRE test dates.

Graduate Record Examinations
Educational Testing Service
P.O. Box 6000
Princeton, NJ 08541-6000
(609) 771-7670

**The deadline for Ph.D. applications is January 15:** Rolling admissions for MA.
Financial Aid

A number of tuition scholarships and some departmental fellowships are awarded to entering and continuing students in the Ph.D. program. The department’s policy in making these awards is to try to aid as many students as possible in the first two years. Subsequently, every effort is made to aid as many third-year students as possible, depending on factors such as availability of funds, academic merit, and financial need. More advanced students are aided as funds permit. M.A. students and Ph.D. students who are not receiving merit-based awards are eligible for need-based scholarships from the Graduate School.

Anthropology students can compete for Sachar Fellowships, which provide funds for pre-dissertation and dissertation research abroad. Several teaching and research assistantships are available to students beyond the first year of graduate study. Ideally, teaching assistants work closely with the faculty in designing courses, advising students, and grading assignments. Teaching assistants are given opportunities to lecture and lead class discussion but are not usually expected to staff weekly sections.

Other types of fellowships and instructorships are available through the University as students progress through the program.

Affirmative Action

Brandeis University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Affirmative Action Officer
Gryzmish 103
Box 9110
Waltham, MA 02254
(617) 736-3015
Faculty


Javier Urcid, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Yale University. Archaeology of complex societies, writing systems and decipherment, osteology, Mesoamerica, native America. “Codices on Stone: The Genesis of Writing in Southwestern Mesoamerica” in Journal of Hispanic Literature; Articles and reviews in Mexico, Monte Alban, Estudios Recientes, Notas Mesoamericanas, and other journals.


Alumni/ae

Brandeis M.A.s and Ph.D.s in Anthropology have been or are currently employed by the following institutions:

Adelphi University
Andrews University
University of Alberta
Bates College
Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel
Boston University
Bowdoin College
Brandeis University
Brown University
University of California
University of Cincinnati
Curry College
Dartmouth College
Dartmouth Medical School
Davidson College
University of Delaware
Alumni/ae, continued

Georgetown University
Getty Foundation
University of Haifa
Harvard University
Holy Cross College
Humboldt State University
Kansas State University
University of Mariano Galvez, Guatemala
University of Maryland
University of Massachusetts, Boston
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
University of Michigan
Universite de Moncton, Canada
Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico
New York State Psychiatric Institute
Northeastern University
Oakland University
University of Pittsburgh
Polytechnic Institute, Ibadan, Nigeria Alumni/ae, continued
University of Puerto Rico
Rhode Island College
Rutgers University
St. Andrews University, Scotland
Smith College
Smithsonian Institution
Southern Illinois University
University of Texas
Tufts University
U.S. Department of Fisheries
University of Vermont
Wellesley College
Wheaton College
Willamette University
Yale University