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Intro

The Department of Anthropology and Sociology is pleased to have you as an anthropology major or minor! We have prepared this handbook to provide you with information that we hope will help you find your way through your degree and beyond successfully. Please let us know if you find it useful and how it could be improved.

Deadlines

There are specific deadlines for registration, add/drop, applying for graduation, etc. These can be found on the academic calendar posted on the Registrar’s page: http://www.usm.edu/registrar/calendars. Failure to comply with deadlines can delay your graduation or lead to financial penalties.

In addition to deadlines that you must follow every semester (e.g. dropping classes) or pertain to special circumstances (e.g. you have an I in a class), all students should be aware that one semester prior to graduation you must file an application for graduation and complete exit surveys. More information, including a specific deadline for your graduation date, can be found at: http://www.usm.edu/registrar/graduation-commencement

Degree requirements

Major

Students majoring in anthropology must complete all general education requirements of the College of Arts and Letters, and have a minor in another discipline. Student may wish to consult with their advisor about a minor that best complements their academic and career interests.

The anthropology major itself requires 33 hours in anthropology, including:

- **ANT 221: Cultural and Linguistic Anthropology (3 hours):** This class is offered each fall and spring semester.
- **ANT 231: Archaeology and Physical Anthropology (3 hours):** This class is offered each fall semester only.
- **ANT 301: History of Anthropology (3 hours):** This class is offered each fall semester only.
- **ANT 401: Senior Seminar in Anthropology (3 hours):** This class is offered each spring semester only.
- **Anthropology electives (21 hours)**

In the capstone seminar you will conduct an independent research project involving the collection and analysis of your own data. Students are encouraged to talk about it with students who have had the class and with Dr. Hayden 1-2 semesters prior to taking the class.

Minor

Anthropology complements a major in other disciplines very well and students interested in minoring in it should discuss their interests with anthropology faculty. The minor requires 18 credits in anthropology, including ANT 221 and 231. See the department webpage for some ideas on how to set up an individualized program of study specific to your interests (http://www.usm.edu/anthropology-sociology/anthropology-minor).
Some important policies

Advisement

Students are required to see an advisor prior to finalizing registration for classes. Advisement appointments are an opportunity to discuss your degree progress, summer plans, and career aspirations with your advisor in addition to your course schedule.

You should come to your appointment with a schedule already completed in SOAR. If you see your advisor before registration opens, you will do this by putting courses in your “shopping cart” in SOAR. If your appointment is after registration begins, you should pre-registering for classes. You will receive an email from Petra and/or your advisor to remind you to make an appointment during the advisement period. Failure to complete registration by meeting with an advisor may lead to you losing your place in classes you hope to take.

University requirements

Students should familiarize themselves with their University Bulletin and all relevant policies. Check them frequently. The Dean’s Office has also posted very useful resources to help you with this: http://www.usm.edu/arts-letters/now/student-resources/student-services.html. This page succinctly explains the most important requirements and common issues faced by students.

Incompletes

Incompletes at the University of Southern Mississippi are reserved for exceptional circumstances outside the student’s control, such as a family emergency; they are not meant to provide relief for poor time management. If you feel that you might need to take an incomplete in a class, speak with your professor ahead of time and as soon as you realize that you have a problem. The professor is not required to grant your request. Some circumstances may not warrant an incomplete or you might be better served by retaking the class to replace the grade. Students are now permitted to repeat up to 12 credits to replace grades.

When an Incomplete is assigned, the professor will write a memo indicating all assignments completed (with grades) and all assignments remaining, with a due date for completion. This statement will then be signed and dated by both the professor and student, with a copy given to the Department Chair.

Students who do not complete their assignments by the agreed-upon date will meet with the professor and submit a written explanation regarding the need for an extension to the professor and the chair. Students who do not complete the Incomplete by the end of the following semester will receive the grade of “F” with no further grade changes allowed, except in the most extreme exceptions as determined by the professor of record and the Department Chair.

Recommended experiences

Students are urged to think of their education holistically and as more than a sequence of classes and requirements. Instead, think of your time with us as part of a process of personal and professional development leading towards a satisfying life post-graduation. You should discuss your interests and aspirations with your advisor and other faculty regularly and think about how the work you do in classes and in extra-curricular activities complement each other. Towards that end, we also encourage you to engage in as many enrichment activities as possible. The following are a few of the most common possibilities.
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Field school

We offer an archaeological and/or ethnographic field school most summers. You register for these as you would a class and use them to learn research skills in the field. You can also attend field schools run by other universities if you have a specific interest and transfer the credits to the University of Southern Mississippi—as long as this can be done within the University regulations governing transfer credit. Field schools are not only a way to gain valuable experience with research methods and working in teams (as well as 6-9 upper-division credits towards graduation), but also a time to form friendships that can endure into the future.

Labs

We have two archaeology labs and a physical anthropology lab equipped for both nutritional anthropology and bioarchaeological research. In addition, Dr. Smith has a colony of bushbabies. There are many opportunities for interested and reliable undergraduates to work closely with both faculty and graduate students in these labs. You may work on either a professor or a graduate student project. Students may also receive permission to develop their own research project using lab resources under the direction, and at the discretion, of the professor in charge of the lab.

In addition, we have both video and audio recording equipment that students may check out for conducting qualitative research in either cultural or linguistic anthropology. There is a computer that students may use in the department for data analysis or working with visual and audio files.

Work done in any of these labs can be used for classes, senior capstone projects, theses, or independent academic work. You are also most welcome to just volunteer.

Students who conduct independent research should speak with their advisor or research mentor to ensure they comply with all ethical requirements. For some projects and under certain circumstances, this may require approval by a university committee called the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to beginning data collection. Although this is an important step in the research process, it is not difficult and should not frighten you away from conducting independent research.

Center for Undergraduate Research

The Center for Undergraduate Research (CUR) has the mission of encouraging student-faculty collaboration in research, scholarship, and creative activities. You are encouraged to apply for the Eagle Scholars Program for Undergraduate Research (SPUR), which provides research funds for independent undergraduate research conducted in collaboration with a faculty mentor. The Center’s website is http://www.usm.edu/research/center-undergraduate-research.

Study abroad

We encourage students to study abroad if possible. The university has many study abroad programs and financial aid options. You should investigate the possibilities on the study abroad website as soon as possible and plan your schedule ahead. For example, some classes (e.g. ANT 301 and 401) are only offered in certain semesters, so you need to make sure you will be in Hattiesburg when you need to take those. http://www.usm.edu/study-abroad

Study abroad can be a good way to complete a language requirement or to refine your language skills after learning the basics in the 101-202 sequence on campus. With careful planning and faculty permission, you might be able to use a study abroad program for time to conduct research that could be used for a thesis or capstone paper.
Internships

Internships can be a good way to gain work experience and develop professional contacts. Students who have taken 12 credits of anthropology beyond the 100-level and have a GPA of at least 2.5 may receive 1-3 anthropology credits for an internship. Up to 6 credits of internship may count towards your degree. Please be aware that the internship is graded on a pass/fail basis. “P” grades are not calculated into your GPA and therefore will have no effect on your GPA. However, an “F” will negatively affect your GPA. See the department webpage for the application and description of requirements: [http://www.usm.edu/sites/default/files/groups/department-anthropology-and-sociology/pdf/undergraduate_internship_forms.pdf](http://www.usm.edu/sites/default/files/groups/department-anthropology-and-sociology/pdf/undergraduate_internship_forms.pdf).

Conferences

Students can attend academic conferences regardless of whether they are presenting a paper. It can be a good way to meet people and learn more about the discipline, especially if you think you might want to attend graduate school. Sometimes there are conferences held in nearby cities or a group of students can plan to attend together. Many organizations have student groups that sponsor activities specifically for undergraduate members. Some conferences offer students free registration in return for volunteer work at the conference.

Students who conduct original research projects should consider presenting at a conference. If you do this, you should work with a professor to improve your presentation and talk with us about arranging to do a practice presentation in front of faculty and peers. Some conferences also have the option of presenting your work in poster format. See the hallway of the Department office suite for examples.

Each spring, there is a University Undergraduate Conference with generous prize money. We hope you will attend this prior to doing research and present when you have worked on a research project. For more information, see [http://www.usm.edu/research/undergraduate-symposium-research-and-creative-activity](http://www.usm.edu/research/undergraduate-symposium-research-and-creative-activity).

Publishing and paper awards

If you produce a good research paper, consider working with a professor to improve it for publication and/or submission for one of the nationally available awards for undergraduate research papers. As mentioned below, one possibility is through Lambda Alpha. However, there are also other possibilities that might be appropriate for your work.

The University of Southern Mississippi publishes The Catalyst, a journal for USM undergraduates to publish papers about their research. Its website is: [http://aquila.usm.edu/southernmisscatalyst/](http://aquila.usm.edu/southernmisscatalyst/).

There are some other venues specifically for publishing undergraduate work. The Undergraduate Journal of Anthropology and Archaeology published by the University of Toronto is specifically for undergraduate work in anthropology: [http://uja.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/uja/index](http://uja.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/uja/index).

Some national associations have awards for the best undergraduate paper. When we see an announcement for these, we will ask Petra to forward it to you. However, you can find information on many of them here: [http://www.aaanet.org/about/prizes-awards/section_awards.cfm](http://www.aaanet.org/about/prizes-awards/section_awards.cfm).

Anthropology Society

The Anthropology Society is a student-run association for USM anthropology students and those interested in anthropology. It includes both undergraduate and graduate students and is an excellent way to meet other students and develop a sense of community within the department. Although the
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association has a faculty advisor, it is student run and is only as active as the students who participate. It is therefore also a valuable opportunity to gain leadership experience!

In the past, the Anthropology Society has hosted departmental potluck lunches at the end of the fall semester, showed films, taken field trips, gone camping, sponsored talks, held bake sales to raise funds (for the society and to assist fellow students who have suffered tragedies), and numerous other activities. It is an important part of the life of the department and the development of relations with your fellow students will prove to be one of the most rewarding and valuable aspects of your college career. We encourage you to get involved!

Lambda Alpha National Honor Society

Lambda Alpha is a national honors society for anthropology students. Requirements for undergraduate membership into the University of Southern Mississippi’s Beta Chapter are a 3.00 GPA in at least 12 hours of anthropology as well as a 2.75 GPA overall. Both majors and minors are eligible to join. If you meet these requirements, you should receive an invitation to join in the spring semester. If you do not, please let Dr. Danforth know prior to the Department’s annual awards day in April.

The USM (Beta of Mississippi) chapter of Lambda Alpha annually sponsors a book prize in the spring for the best graduate and undergraduate papers written in an anthropology class during the prior calendar year. If you have a paper that you would like to be submitted, contact Dr. Danforth for more information. The deadline for submission is in early February.

The national Lambda Alpha organization sponsors a $5,000 scholarship to a graduating senior major in anthropology to attend graduate school. The deadline for these is March 1st. More information can be found at http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/anthropology/lambdaalpha or by contacting Dr. Danforth.

Lambda Alpha has a journal, Lambda Alpha Journal, with 50% of its space reserved for student publications. You may wish to read the journal for examples of exemplary student work and potentially submit your own research.

Senior thesis and honors

Senior thesis

If you choose to write a senior thesis, you will conduct an original research project and write up your results with the guidance of a faculty advisor. You will need to ask a professor to be your advisor based on the project you wish to conduct. This should be a professor who will be able to assist you and with whom you will be able to work; it is not necessarily the same advisor you see prior to registering for classes. Your thesis advisor will approve the topic and guide you through the process of conducting a major research project. Typically the project will take one year to complete.

Students often find the prospect of writing a thesis daunting. However, faculty are here to help you through the process and we are confident you will be glad you did it after you are done. Students who hope to go to graduate school are particularly encouraged to do a thesis, but all students can benefit from the experience of conceptualizing and carrying out a major independent project. If you have a non-academic career in mind, doing a thesis or senior project can be an excellent way to gain experience relevant to potential employers. Discuss it with your advisor if you are eligible.

You do not need to be an Honors student to write a thesis.
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Thesis deadlines

In addition to all other University deadlines, those students who write a senior thesis should bear the following deadlines in mind:

- one calendar year prior to graduation
  - file notice of intent to write a departmental thesis for those pursuing this option
  - file notice of intent to complete the requirements to graduate with honors, if eligible
- six weeks prior to graduation
  - Thesis writers schedule comprehensive exam
- two weeks prior to graduation
  - Thesis-writers must submit a final draft of the thesis to their committee.
- two weeks prior to graduation
  - bound copy of senior thesis due to department (if applicable)

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Honors College

If you are in the Honors College, you are required to write a thesis to qualify for “Senior Honors.” See the Honors College website (http://www.usm.edu/honors/curriculum-and-requirements) for a full description of the requirements and process.

Departmental thesis

If you are not in the Honors College, you may choose to write a departmental thesis if you meet the minimum academic requirement of an overall cumulative gpa of 3 and a 3.25 in your anthropology major. Students who wish to write a thesis are strongly encouraged to take a methods class prior to their senior year, although this is not required. You must notify the department one calendar year prior to graduation and are encouraged to have discussed the possibility and potential project(s) with faculty prior to that. You will work most closely with your thesis advisor (committee chair), but will also form a thesis committee of two additional faculty.

You will also be required to take a comprehensive exam on fundamental anthropological concepts. See the Department website for a more detailed discussion of the requirements, including required forms you will need to submit (http://www.usm.edu/sites/default/files/groups/department-anthropology-and-sociology/pdf/the_senior_thesis_in_ant__soc.pdf).

Graduating with Honors

Students with particularly strong academic records will graduate with honors. The cumulative gpa determines the type of honors as follows:

- 3.5 or higher: honors.
- 3.8 or higher: highest honors

Graduating with Latin designations

Students who complete a senior thesis and pass a departmental comprehensive exam may graduate with Latin designations based on their cumulative gpa:

- 3.25 to 3.49: *cum laude*
There are two paths towards graduating with Latin designation. Students who are in the Honors College must complete the requirements Senior Honors in the Honors College. Other students may complete the requirements for departmental honors by completing a senior thesis and passing a comprehensive exam administered by the Anthropology Program Faculty.

All students who meet the basic academic requirements (i.e. gpa of 3.25 or better) are encouraged to consider this option in consultation with their advisors. You must file notice of intent to complete these requirements with the Department Chair and Program Director at least one academic year prior to your expected graduation.

University resources

Clubs

In addition to the Anthropology Society, USM has numerous student organizations ranging from Amnesty International and anime to women’s ultimate frisbee and everything in between! See what you can do to get to know people or promote your favorite activity or cause on campus: http://www.usm.edu/student-activities.

Career Services

We encourage you to make an appointment with Career Services early in your college career and not to leave planning for life after graduation for your last semester.

Student Services

The university has numerous resources available for you when you run into difficulties, whether these be personal, academic, or health related. You should use them, rather than flounder alone.

http://www.usm.edu/student-life/get-help

For academic help: http://www.usm.edu/success/student-support-services
If you are a first year student: http://www.usm.edu/success
Health Center: http://www.usm.edu/student-health-services
Counseling: http://www.usm.edu/student-counseling-services

Other resources

You are encouraged to explore the website of the American Anthropological Association (AAA). For example, this page lists a number of national internships and paper awards available to undergraduates: http://www.aaanet.org/resources/students/Undergraduates.cfm. This page offers some resources on careers and how to succeed as a student, among other things: http://www.aaanet.org/resources/students/.

AAA has a reduced price membership option for undergraduates. Currently an undergraduate membership is $35, which gives you all the regular benefits of membership including automatic membership in the National Association of Student Anthropologists, various publications, and on-line access to a database of all AAA journals.

In addition, you may find useful resources and opportunities on the websites of other professional organizations specific to your interests. Many of these associations are listed as “sections” on the
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AAA website, but others are not. You should explore those that are relevant to your specific interests as these develop. Exploring these sites may also help you to define your interests and career goals.

In addition to the AAA, many other organizations also have websites that you might find useful. For physical anthropology, these include the American Association of Physical Anthropologists (http://www.physanth.org) and the Paleopathology Association (http://www.paleopathology.org). For archaeology, they include the Society for American Antiquity (http://www.saa.org), Society for Historical Archaeology (http://www.sha.org), Southeastern Archaeology Conference (http://www.southeasternarchaeology.org), and Mississippi Archaeological Association (http://www.msarchaeology.org).

Career planning

What to do with an anthropology degree

Although it is relatively rare for jobs to be advertised for anthropologists, this does not mean that employers do not hire anthropology majors. Even those jobs available for PhDs in anthropology outside of universities are not usually labeled as such! This is a reality that is shared by other liberal arts majors. Instead, the skills developed through the study and practice of anthropology are highly desirable in a wide variety of contexts. Generally speaking, you are encouraged to develop a specific interest within anthropology that you will be able to market to employers and/or graduate programs. For example, do you want to apply anthropology to environmental or health-related issues? Are you concerned with social justice or do you want to work in a corporation? As you explore these diverse options, you can work towards developing the knowledge and skills that will interest potential employers.

We want you to explore career options and interests in dialogue with your professors, rather than think of the degree as a checklist. As you develop your interests, you may also wish to talk to professionals in the fields that interest you to learn how they have developed their careers and what advice they would offer. Visit the Career Services office early, long before you graduate, and work on developing a strong resume of interesting experiences and skills throughout your college career. Consider using summers as an opportunity to gain experiences outside the classroom.

Yearly tasks, as per Career Services

Career Services will work with you throughout your college career and has developed a handbook, which includes a list of suggested tasks beginning with your first year of college. See page 10 of this document: http://www.usm.edu/sites/default/files/groups/career-services/images/70623careerguide05.pdf.

They offer a great deal of advice, but much of it can be summarized by encouraging you to be active and to think of your college career in terms of developing your whole perspective, not simply passing classes. Be active in student organizations and try to take on leadership roles. Look for opportunities to meet people and gain work experience. When working, look for ways to gain greater responsibilities or experiences more directly related to your interests.

Networking

As an anthropology major, you realize the importance of social connections and relationships. Take advantage of opportunities to get to know faculty, graduate students, and your colleagues. You should learn to talk about your major and career interests broadly with people you meet in the community, through family and friends, and while traveling. You never know when someone might tell you about an opportunity, ask a question that gives you new insight, or offer suggestions that help
you succeed. When possible and appropriate, join professional organizations and attend professional meetings, and be sure to volunteer for community activities whenever possible.

Advice from former students

The following are some comments made by former students in response to the question “what advice would you give students choosing an anthropology major” on the exit survey taken prior to graduation.

- “Go to all the talks and events you can they are almost always worth the effort.”
- “Get to know your professors from the beginning. Also, if you have something relevant to say about a topic in your classes, don’t be afraid to say it.” “I would encourage them to talk to their professors more. Ask about their research, offer to help with it.” “I would advise new majors to get to know the faculty and staff in our department as soon as they can and to make friends in classes. There are great people in the field and it will make your college experience if you get to know them.”
- “Get involved in the department through its clubs and activities and make friends with Petra.” “To get involved in field work as soon as possible and the ANT Society, would be my advice to students. Read read read”
- “be ready to read and write” “Pay attention and make sure to have your work in on time. Enjoy your classes, make friends, and learn. I’ve learned a lot here, and my views on many things have changed. I feel that studying anthropology has made me a better human being.”
- “I would tell them to get a good understanding for the types of jobs they will work with an Anthropology major.”
- “I would advise these students to take a wide range of classes taught by all of the professors in the department. You never know when you may decide to choose a new path within anthropology and a wider knowledge base is very helpful.”
- “keep an open mind”
- "To pick a minor that compliments their degree in a way that while enhance employment opportunities."
- “Start taking upper level classes sooner. Don’t wait and take all the "easy classes" first. You need to save some easier classes for later when you have to take the writing intensive classes”
- “Also - do a field school! They are great experiences both for CVs and for life skills. The friends you make at a field school are like none you will ever have anywhere else.” “Plan ahead and take a field school class.” “Go to field school, archaeological or cultural. Just try it. When I was in high school, I attended a few archaeological field schools through the University of Alabama, and it really made a lasting impression.”

Final thoughts

Anthropology is a wonderful major that can broaden your perspectives about the world and offers a unique way of seeing. We are proud that you have chosen to be part of the next generation of anthropologists and trust that you will find it as rewarding a challenge as the generations of students before you have. The discipline offers many opportunities and we hope you take advantage of as many of them as possible. We invite you to discuss with us the possibilities as you explore and shape your future. Remember that our office hours are always open and we love to talk to you at any time of the semester, not just advisement weeks!
FACULTY/STAFF

Marie Elaine Danforth (Ph.D. Indiana, 1989) Professor. Physical Anthropology. Dr Danforth's interests include human osteology, bioarchaeology, dental anthropology, and forensic anthropology. Research areas include Mesoamerica (the Maya region) and southeastern United States. Graduate courses taught include Seminar in Physical Anthropology, Bioarchaeology, and Human Variation. (m.danforth@usm.edu)

Bridget Hayden (Ph.D. Michigan 1999) Associate Professor. Cultural Anthropology. Dr. Hayden’s interests include the anthropology of migration, space and place, and the socio-cultural aspects of capitalism and globalization. Geographical area of interest is Central America. (bridget.hayden@usm.edu)

H. Edwin Jackson (Ph.D. Michigan, 1986) Professor. Archaeology. Dr. Jackson’s interests include archaeological method and theory, human ecology, and zooarchaeology. Research areas include southeastern United States. Graduate courses taught include Seminar in Archaeology, Prehistory of Southeastern Indians, Prehistoric Archaeological Analysis, and Archaeology and Public Policy. (ed.jackson@usm.edu)

Jeffrey Kaufmann (Ph.D. Wisconsin, 2001) Professor. Cultural Anthropology. Dr. Kaufmann’s interests include ethnohistory and ecological anthropology. Research area of interest is Africa. Graduate courses taught include Seminar in Ethnology, Visual Anthropology, and Ecological Anthropology. (jeffrey.kaufmann@usm.edu)

B. Katherine Smith (Ph.D. Purdue University 2012) Assistant Professor. Physical Anthropology. Dr. Smith’s research interests include captive primate nutrition, health and wellbeing, the evolution of diet related chronic diseases (particularly obesity), and stress and health disparities among underrepresented populations in the United States.

Amy L. Young (Ph.D. Tennessee, 1995) Associate Professor. Archaeology. Dr. Young’s research interests include historical archaeology, African-American archaeology, urban archaeology, archaeological theory, and prehistory of the southeastern United States. (amy.young@usm.edu)

STAFF support for the program is provided by Ms. Petra Lamb, Administrative Assistant for the Department. Petra is the go-to person for all matters of paperwork, deadlines that are not clear, and many varieties of general questions. When in doubt, check with Petra and she will help you out. Always read email from Petra because it is likely to be important.