



Anthropology Doctoral Handbook 2025 – 2026

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1. Program Overview

Anthropologists study humans in relation to themselves, their past, their environment, and their biological heritage. As a discipline, Anthropology spans the social and natural sciences and the humanities, and is equipped with various tools and approaches to study human problems. We are unique among social sciences in our commitment to a holistic perspective and in our reliance on fieldwork as a primary means of gathering information. Our knowledge and skills contribute critical perspectives on contemporary transformations within academia and in society at large.

Graduate education in Anthropology at MSU is directed toward development of high achievement in scholarship among a new generation of anthropologists, including a commitment to research, public engagement, and the ethical practice of anthropology. The various stages of graduate studies, including courses, comprehensive exams, proposals and dissertation research and writing, are all necessary steps in the development of a professional anthropologist. There are also opportunities to participate in a scholarly community through department bag lunch, visiting lectures, faculty searches and interdisciplinary programs.

As a discipline, Anthropology highlights the value of diverse knowledge, viewpoints and perspectives, and the process of investigating and integrating knowledge from diverse sources in the production and implementation of new ideas, methods, and policy. The Department of Anthropology at MSU takes pride in the diversity of our own community of scholars, including our graduate students and faculty, and is committed to maintaining and supporting this diversity both in our Department and in the profession. The Department also emphasizes the importance of collaborative work with the people and communities whom we study, and the need to share our research with a variety of audiences.

As part of a land grant institution, the Department of Anthropology at Michigan State University is theoretically engaged and practice-oriented in its approaches to research and teaching. These approaches are grounded in participatory fieldwork and a comparative perspective. The faculty and graduate students together form a community of engaged, committed scholars who are dedicated to making a difference in people's lives. MSU's Department of Anthropology includes faculty from the four traditional subfields of the discipline: sociocultural anthropology, linguistic anthropology, biological anthropology, and archaeology. These faculty members form the basis of the Department's nationally recognized programs in Sociocultural and Linguistic Anthropology; Medical Anthropology; Forensic Anthropology; and Archaeology.

This handbook provides an overview of the graduate program in Anthropology as well as the requirements for the degree. For a comprehensive discussion of the Department, programs, and faculty, please see the Department website at: <https://anthropology.msu.edu/>

The graduate program at MSU focuses on developing the necessary skills for becoming professional anthropologists. In addition to course work, students are encouraged to participate in departmental bagged lunches and workshops, to attend sponsored talks, and to present their work at professional meetings. Proposal and dissertation defenses are open, and all students and faculty are invited to attend. Sharing student and faculty research is vital to building the culture of the Department. Additionally, the Department hosts graduate events focused on writing, publication, and research ethics; all of which are designed specifically with the professionalization of students in mind.

The faculty has designed a rubric (see following page) that outlines the skills and capabilities that students are expected to develop through their degree program. The rubric demonstrates what constitutes performance at each of three levels: emerging, developing, and proficient. It is expected that students will be proficient by the end of their coursework and comprehensive exams. This rubric is used in graduate student evaluations ([see Section 7](#)) and may be used by committees and/or individual course instructors in assessing student progress. The rubric is followed by a brief summary of the program and the expected timeline of progress.

MSU Anthropology Department Graduate Student Rubric

Objective	Below Expectations	Emerging	Developing	Proficient
1. Ability to work critically and creatively with theory to address anthropological questions	Little or no evidence of critical/creative thinking or evaluation. Does not identify author's argument; Does not recognize theoretical framework.	Identifies author's argument; identifies theoretical framework or perspective used. Recognizes the relationship between critical theory and anthropological issues.	Works critically and comparatively across arguments and frameworks, recognizes key terms and definitions, and recognizes nuance and distinction within theoretical works.	Synthesizes work within and across critical frameworks and/or bodies of anthropological literature to generate innovative questions and approaches.
2. Writing and Data Analytics	Difficulty correctly/appropriately articulating ideas or synthesizing information and data.	Correct/appropriate articulation of ideas/information.	Organizes arguments effectively.	Supports/illustrates arguments with data/examples.
3. Writing and data communication	Does not effectively communicate at an appropriate level.	Identifies differences in authorial/analytical styles and matches them to appropriate contexts.	Able to locate and use evidence appropriate for the context, apply effective critique.	Able to communicate effectively across different contexts (grant, article, review) and for multiple audiences.
4. Research design	Does not comprehend research design or the appropriate application of methods.	Developing knowledge and ability to apply a range of methods; Recognizes and understands ethical obligations	Incorporates existing literature and knowledge of research context to formulate anthropological questions.	Articulates a researchable question; utilizes methods of data collection and analysis appropriate for theoretical framework, fieldwork context, and ethical obligations.
5. Professional self-presentation	Does not contribute to class discussion or is disrespectful of other opinions	Expresses ideas and raises questions in class; interacts respectfully with peers and faculty.	Actively facilitates learning by self and others by engaging in class discussions; expresses ideas and questions clearly; listens and responds to others respectfully.	Delivers clear and well-organized oral presentations or lectures; effectively responds to questions from audience, able to manage and lead discussion.

Summary Timeline of Student Progress

First year students

1. Coursework selected in consultation with first year advisor (See First Year Plan of Study- Appendix 1).
2. [Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research \(RECR\)](#) training.
3. Select and meet with faculty members who would be appropriate for their Guidance Committee Chair/Members.
4. Complete Human Research Protection Program (IRB) training and obtain IRB approval during the first year (if students are planning to do research during the summer). Students must have IRB approval before they begin their research.

Second year students

1. Continue required coursework as well as coursework recommended by the Guidance Committee.
2. By the end of 3rd semester, all students must have a fully formed Guidance Committee in [GradPlan](#).
3. Course Plan entered into [GradPlan](#) no later than the end of 4th semester.
4. Obtain or renew IRB approval (if required).
5. RECR training and verification.
6. Initial Guidance Committee meeting (must be held no later than the end of the 3rd semester).

Third/Fourth year students

1. Enrollment in courses as required by the Guidance Committee.
2. Complete comprehensive exam bibliographies in consultation with the Guidance Committee.
3. Obtain IRB approval for dissertation research (if required).
4. Complete the written exams and oral defense of comprehensive exams.
5. Complete dissertation proposal and proposal defense.
6. Apply for external funding for dissertation research.
7. RECR training and verification.
8. Annual meeting with the Guidance Committee.

Subsequent years

1. Enroll in ANP 999 credits for dissertation research (minimum of 24 required, maximum of 36).
2. Renew and amend IRB approval as necessary.
3. Dissertation research and/or writing.
4. RECR training and verification.
5. Annual meeting with the Guidance Committee.

Final Semester

1. Oral Dissertation Defense.
2. Must be enrolled in at least one credit of ANP 999 during semester of Defense.
3. Final Submission of the dissertation to the University with required revisions completed.
4. RECR training and verification.

Doctoral Degree

The graduate program in Anthropology is directed to prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to become independent researchers and scholars, regardless of their ultimate careers or work settings. All graduate degrees in Anthropology therefore share the same basic structure, including coursework, research design, independent research that integrates data and anthropological theory, and the communication and presentation of research results. Students have eight years to complete the PhD program beginning with the semester of matriculation into the PhD program.

There are currently two options for MA degrees as well that must be completed within five years. For specifics on Master's degrees including requirements see pages 7 and 17. Students are required to complete all of their Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (RECR) requirements annually. Students whose research involves human subjects must also obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to conducting research. For a fuller discussion of these requirements see [Section 8](#).

Coursework

The first part of the graduate program focuses on coursework. Students take classes related to the range of in contemporary perspectives in anthropological theory, a background in qualitative and quantitative research methods, and knowledge that is specific to a student's subdiscipline and research area (for requirements, see [Section 3](#)). Graduate level courses are designed to cultivate the skills and capabilities necessary to become practicing anthropologists as well as prepare students for the next stage in their degree program (Appendix 17).

After completion of coursework, students in the PhD program prepare for research by fulfilling several requirements that represent intellectual steps in the process of preparing for, designing, implementing, and disseminating independent research. These requirements are the comprehensive exams, dissertation proposal, dissertation research and completion.

Comprehensive Exams

Comprehensive Exams in Anthropology include five parts: (1) Bibliographies, (2) Written exams, (3) Oral defense of exams, (4) Preparation of a dissertation research proposal and (5) Oral defense of dissertation research proposal. The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to test the student's ability to relate selected topics to broader issues in anthropology and to enable students to demonstrate substantive, methodological and technical competence relevant to their future research and career. To successfully pass, the student must:

- 1) Prepare annotated bibliographies of professional literature relevant to the student's topic and geographic area of interest (see Appendix 18 for examples of exam topics).
- 2) Demonstrate mastery of this body of literature in a comprehensive written exam that achieves professional standards of thinking, reasoning, and writing (see Appendix 15 for evaluating exams). The written portion of the Comprehensive Examination consists of questions, drafted and written by the Guidance Committee, on each of the student's areas/topics of concentration.
- 3) Defend the comprehensive exams orally to the Guidance Committee.

- 4) Design a feasible research project including statement of a research problem, review of appropriate theoretical and methodological literature, and discussion of the contribution of the proposed research to the discipline. This takes the form of a dissertation research proposal that may be used or modified to apply for extramural funding.
- 5) Formally present the proposal in a forum that is open to the public and includes the Guidance Committee.

Students who do not successfully pass the written and/or oral exams can retake either component. The Guidance Committee can require a student to retake portions or to retake the entire exam. Students must successfully complete the exams after the retake or they will be directed to complete a terminal Masters. Comprehensive exams must be successfully completed within five years of the beginning of the graduate program.

Dissertation Research and Completion

After the student has passed their Comprehensive Examination, including both the written exam and the proposal and proposal defense, they are now a doctoral candidate. At this point the student undertakes research leading to the doctoral dissertation. The doctoral dissertation is based on original research conducted by the student. The Department expects fieldwork-based dissertations. Alternative kinds of dissertations may be possible, but must be justified and approved by the student's Guidance Committee in writing.

- 1) Performing independent fieldwork, including data collection, organization, and analysis.
- 2) Writing up the results of research in the format of a dissertation that represents an original theoretical or methodological contribution to the field of Anthropology.
- 3) Formally presenting the dissertation to an audience including the Guidance Committee, faculty members, graduate students and interested members of the public.

Master's Degrees

Students may choose or will be directed by either the Department or their committees to complete a Master's degree. There are two options for MA degrees within the Department:

- 1) Plan A Master's Degree with a thesis, or
- 2) Plan B Master's Degree with a final evaluation.

Many PhD students complete the Plan B Master's degree while they are students in the PhD program since it is a useful credential. Students with MA degrees are paid higher amounts as teaching and research assistants and are often eligible for summer employment opportunities.

Plan A Master's Degree

A minimum of 30 credits of graduate coursework conforming to the requirements listed in [Section 3](#). Students will establish a Guidance Committee of at least three faculty members, at least two of whom should be from the Department of Anthropology. Students will write an approved thesis proposal, and write and defend a master's thesis. The student must receive Institutional Review Board (IRB) training and approval before beginning research if the thesis research will include human subjects.

Plan B Master's Degree

A minimum of 30 credits of graduate coursework conforming to the requirements listed in [Section 3](#). Students will undergo a final evaluation with a Guidance Committee of at least three faculty members, at least two of whom should be from the Department of Anthropology. The process for final evaluation is determined by the Guidance Committee and students should consult with faculty regarding possibilities.

Dual Major Doctoral Degrees

All dual major doctoral degrees must be reviewed and approved by the Department, College, and the Graduate School. A request for the dual major degree must be submitted via GradPlan within one semester following its development and within the first two years of the student's enrollment at Michigan State University. Students in CSS are required to complete a Memo of Understanding which can be obtained from the Graduate Program Coordinator. See [Dual Doctoral Majors](#) for additional conditions and details.

Interdepartmental Graduate Specializations

Students who are accepted in the graduate program in Anthropology may also apply for admission to one of several affiliated interdepartmental graduate specialization programs. Students may participate in these programs even if they do not complete the specialization. Students in these graduate specializations can also elect Anthropology as their cognate field. These interdepartmental specializations are listed below:

- [African Studies](#)
- [American Indian and Indigenous Studies](#)
- [Asian Studies](#)
- [Center for Gender in Global Context](#)
- [Ecology, Evolutionary Biology & Behavior](#)
- [Environmental Science and Policy Program](#)
- [*Forensic Sciences](#)
- [Gender, Justice, and Environmental Change](#)
- Latin American and Caribbean Studies

**This interdisciplinary program offers a Master's of Science (MS) degree with a concentration in Forensic Chemistry.*

Requirements for a Doctorate in Philosophy in Anthropology

Admissions

Undergraduate Preparation

Students applying for admission to the graduate program in Anthropology should have a minimum 3.0 grade point average in their last two years of undergraduate work (the mean GPA of each entering graduate student cohort is significantly higher). Although all applicants will be considered regardless of their previous fields of academic training, students will usually have earned at least 12 undergraduate credits in anthropology before entering the program. Students who did not have undergraduate preparation in physical anthropology will need to consult with their advisor regarding preparatory work for ANP 840. Options might include sitting in on ANP 206, being a TA for ANP 206, or taking a one-credit reading course.

In the absence of the recommended course credits and/or coursework, applicants should demonstrate in their application that they have a suitable background to succeed in the program. At departmental discretion, applicants, if accepted into the program, may be required to complete additional coursework as necessary, which will be described in their letter of acceptance.

Admissions Criteria

The Graduate Admissions Committee considers not only the student's past preparation and performance, but also their interests and needs and whether or not these can best be accommodated by the graduate program of this department. No student is admitted unless at least one (preferably two) regular MSU faculty member have agreed to work with that student. You are strongly encouraged to research faculty interest areas and communicate directly with the faculty you are interested in working with prior to submitting an application for graduate study.

Application Form

Please apply electronically through the Graduate School: <https://grad.msu.edu/apply/>. The application fee is also payable online. The application includes information about applying for financial aid. Prospective students in Anthropology should also include all supporting materials in their online application.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their applications are complete and to verify their status. Applications are not reviewed until they are complete and the application fee has been paid. Please monitor your application frequently by logging into the student portal.

An applicant's application form, and all supporting documents, must be received by the Department by **December 1st**. We only review applications for Fall admission.

Documents Needed

The following additional documents are required by the Department and should be uploaded to your application via the electronic admissions portal:

- 1) **Official transcripts** of all undergraduate and graduate studies should be sent directly to the Department via official electronic methods (e.g. Parchment or National Student

Clearinghouse) or via mail. Any mailed transcripts should be in a sealed envelope and should be sent directly from the institution to the following address:

Department of Anthropology
655 Auditorium Road, Room 350
Michigan State University,
East Lansing, MI 48824

- 2) **Official GRE scores.** The student must ensure that their official report of GRE scores are sent to Michigan State University. Use the following codes to order scores: University code: 1465. The GRE must have been taken within the last five years prior to application for graduate study.
- 3) **Three letters of recommendation** from persons of high credibility who are in a position to judge the applicant's academic ability and accomplishments. We recommend that at least one of these letters is from a professional or academic anthropologist.
- 4) **One or two writing samples.** For example: undergraduate or graduate research papers, published paper, or electronic copy of presented conference poster.
- 5) **Personal Statement.** This essay is part of the online application for Graduate Admissions at MSU. The personal statement focuses on your ability and preparation to do graduate level scholarly work, as well as personal and professional experiences that may have led to your interest in anthropology.
- 6) **Academic Statement.** In addition to the above essay, the Department requires a separate essay (1-2 pp, double-spaced), called your academic statement. This is a forward-looking statement that should focus on why you are interested in graduate study in anthropology, and your interest in pursuing graduate education here.
- 7) **Curriculum vita**, outlining your professional training and accomplishments.
- 8) **English Language Competency** (if applicable). International applicants should have all test scores sent from the testing agency directly to Michigan State University. For an updated list of acceptable tests and scores, please review the [Graduate School website](#).

Application Deadline

Graduate students are admitted for the Fall semester only. All necessary materials must arrive at the Department or be uploaded to your application by **December 1st**. This deadline applies to all students – even to students who are not requesting financial aid. The Department's Admissions Committee finalizes decisions on admissions around mid-March.

Coursework Requirements

Students are required to take 30 credits of coursework. Of these credits, at least 21 credits must be in ANP courses and 16 credits need to be at the 800 level or higher. The following courses are required, and count toward the total 30 credits:

- ANP 830 Cultural and Linguistic Theory
- ANP 840 Biocultural Evolution*
- One methods course (ANP 429, 464, 820, 829, 842, 846, 850, 859)
- Subdiscipline Requirements, which are:
 1. Archaeology: ANP 850 and 854
 2. Medical Anthropology: ANP 834 and 835
 3. Physical (Forensic): ANP 842 and ANTR 541
 4. Sociocultural and Linguistic: no specific requirements

For the remaining credits, students need to enroll in courses related to their proposed geographic and/or topical/theoretical concentration. These courses may be in Anthropology or related disciplines.

Subdiscipline requirements listed above may be counted toward the topical/theoretical concentration (See Appendix 3).

In addition, students must take coursework as required upon admission and/or by the student's first year advisor or Guidance Committee. Enrollment and registration information can be accessed by logging into the [Student information System \(SIS\)](#). Finally, students need to take classes or workshops that may be required as a part of the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research requirements (see [Section 8](#)).

Dissertation Credits (ANP 999)

Following the required coursework, students must register for and successfully complete a **minimum of 24 credits** and **no more than 36 credits** of doctoral dissertation research (Course: ANP 999). Requests for overrides to exceed the maximum of 36 credits of 999 must be approved by the College. Requests for overrides to exceed the maximum of 44 credits of 999 must also be approved by the Graduate School. Should the total number of credits go above 45, the RO will confer with the Graduate School before considering the request for an exception. These requests must be routed through the Graduate Program Coordinator (anpgrad@msu.edu).

The minimum and maximum credit requirements can be accessed from the University [Academic Programs Catalog](#).

Students whose committee requires a foreign language for dissertation research should, if possible, begin such study in the first year of graduate work. Only 400 level or above courses can count towards a graduate degree without prior permission from the College and Graduate School.

*Students who did not have undergraduate preparation in physical anthropology will need to consult with their advisor regarding preparatory work for ANP 840. Options might include sitting in on ANP 206, being a TA for ANP 206, or taking a one-credit reading course.

GradPlan

[GradPlan](#) helps doctoral students create and store their degree plans and subsequent graduate program activities. It is where students form their guidance committee (if required), create and update a course list, track RECR, and view and complete their annual research activity guide.

Grad Plan was developed for PhD students to lay out their PhD program of study, record faculty approval, and make notes on all the degree requirements as they are completed. The Record of Comp and Record of Dissertation forms are still required by the department and College and must be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator at the time of completion.

There are a number of resources available online, including a [self-paced training](#) for students, as well as [job aids and overview material](#).

Students should work closely with their first-year advisor/chair to create their Guidance Committee and Course Plan. The student will need to adhere to the specific requirements listed above as well as University requirements.

Creating a GradPlan involves completing Appendix 3 and the following sections within GradPlan:

- **Research Overview** – the student answers research questions including comprehensive exams areas and tentative dissertation topic
- **Committee** – the student designates committee chair and members
- **Course Plan** – the student selects doctoral program courses
- **Annual Review** – the student or department uploads the annual review

The student finalizes the Plan and it electronically routes to the Graduate Program Coordinator for review. After this review, it is electronically routed to the Guidance Committee for approval. Following these approvals, the request must be approved by the Graduate Program Director and the College.

Any changes to the Course Plan or constitution of the Guidance Committee are made electronically and again routed to appropriate members for approval. You can monitor the status of approvals by checking your GradPlan. If you see that approvals are pending you should contact committee members to remind them that your Plan is awaiting their approval.

Comprehensive Examinations

The comprehensive exams consist of: (1) the preparation of an annotated bibliography, (2) completion of the written exam, (3) oral defense of the written exam, (4) preparation of a written dissertation proposal, and (5) the public presentation and oral defense of the proposal. Before the “Record of Comprehensive Examinations” (included here as Appendix 20), is processed, students must have defended the dissertation proposal and successfully completed the written and oral comprehensive examinations.

Preparing the Annotated Bibliography

In consultation with the Guidance Committee, the student will select two or three examination areas. Graduate student bibliographies will consist of either (1) a combination of geographic and topical areas or (2) a combination of only topical areas as agreed upon by the student and the student’s Guidance Committee.

The student, with the advice of the Guidance Committee, then prepares a Comprehensive Exam Bibliography. The total number of entries for the bibliographies is 150. If two areas are defined, each bibliography should contain approximately 75 entries. If three areas are defined, each bibliography should contain approximately 50 entries.

The bibliography is intended to demonstrate the student’s knowledge of the scholarly literature in the selected topic and geographic area. It is more general than the dissertation topic and establishes expertise within a defined area of anthropology (see Appendix 18 for examples).

Acceptable bibliographies must include the following component and formatting requirements:

- A general introduction for each bibliography. For each topic (or topic and area), the student will include a brief introductory essay articulating a justification for the selection of the topic and the theoretical approaches to be considered in addressing the overall topic.
- Annotated References. Each reference must be annotated or justified, either in an annotation for each entry or in a series of short essays in which every entry is cited, providing an explanation of the student’s choice to include specific references.
- Use a consistent format. Each of the bibliographies will adhere to a consistent format. All sources listed in the bibliographies will be cited in the annotations, and all sources cited

will be listed. The number of references should be noted for each section as well as the total for each bibliography.

The student drafts the bibliographies and circulates them among the members of the Guidance Committee for comments and suggestions. Faculty members are expected to respond with comments within two weeks of receiving a draft.

Review of Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee

After the Guidance Committee approves the bibliographies, the student completes the “Request to Schedule the Comprehensive Examination” form (Appendix 9) and attaches it to the bibliographies. These are submitted to the department Graduate Program Coordinator who will verify dates and forward to the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee for review and approval according to the dates set by the Committee at the beginning of the academic year. The comprehensive exams must not be scheduled sooner than ten business days after the turn-in date.

The Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee reviews the bibliographies for adherence to the guidelines provided and ensures comparable and equitable treatment of all graduate students in the Department, regardless of the composition of their Guidance Committees.

The comprehensive bibliographies are the intellectual property of the student who compiles them, and the department does not distribute them. If a student desires access to bibliographies previously prepared by other students, the student should request permission directly from the author of the bibliographies for permission to view them.

Scheduling of Exams/Proposal Defense

Bibliographies must be submitted to the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee by the dates set at the beginning of the academic year. The comprehensive exams must commence no sooner than ten business days after the turn-in date.

Exams and Proposals may not be taken or defended after the University finals week. Students are responsible for scheduling an exam early enough to allow time for a defense by the end of the semester; otherwise, the oral defense will take place in the next fall or spring semester. If there are extreme and extenuating circumstances that make this necessary, this policy can be waived through an agreement with the Guidance Committee and the Chair of the Department.

The Written Exam

After approval, the student is eligible to sit for the comprehensive exams. The written portion of the Comprehensive Examination consists of questions, drafted and written by the Guidance Committee, on each of the student’s areas/topics of concentration. The Guidance Committee can select from three format options for each of the areas in which the student is being examined. Guidance Committee expectations for the content and quality of the questions and the responses to the written exam will differ and be reasonable for each format. It is possible that different questions on the exam can be of different formats.

- 1) An eight-hour, closed-book exam (student may use their written bibliographies for reference). Exams must be scheduled during weekdays only and not on holidays that fall during the week where the office is closed.
- 2) A 48-hour open-book take-home exam. Students can only schedule the dates on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday of any given week in order to complete the exams

within the 48-hour period and send them to the Graduate Program Coordinator for distribution to committee members.

- 3) A two-week open-book take-home exam, with a limit of 30 double-spaced pages.

Evaluation

Each answer is read by two designated readers and evaluated according to Appendix 15. At least one reader for each section must be a member of the Guidance Committee. The second reader may be another faculty member from the Department of Anthropology or may be from outside the Department.

The student and the Guidance Committee develop a tentative schedule including the dates of the exam and the oral defense. The Guidance Committee will evaluate the written exam within two weeks after the student completes the exam, and the oral defense will take place soon thereafter. The Guidance Committee will confer with each other and decide if the student has passed the exam. The Chair of the Guidance Committee will notify the student of this decision no later than 24 hours before the oral exam is scheduled to occur.

If either written response receives a non-passing grade from the committee, the oral portion will typically be postponed. The Guidance Committee decides whether the student will be given the opportunity to rewrite answers or to answer new exam questions.

The Oral Defense of the Exam

The schedule for the oral examination is announced to the Anthropology faculty after the Guidance Committee has met and decided that the student's performance on the written examination is sufficient to justify the oral defense. The student must be given at least 24-hours' notice of this evaluation before the oral exam occurs.

The oral exam is administered by members of the student's Guidance Committee and readers. Any faculty member in the Department may attend, but only the members of the Guidance Committee and official readers decide on the student's performance.

The student's Guidance Committee will decide whether the student has passed or failed each section of the Comprehensive Examination. They will notify the student orally after the decision is made, and then in writing within three days. If the student fails one or more written sections of the exam, the Guidance Committee determines whether the student may retake the failed section(s) of the exam. The written retake must take place no later than the end of the semester following the semester in which the written portion was taken.

Copies of the decision must be provided to the Graduate Program Coordinator via Appendix 9.

The Dissertation Proposal and Defense

The writing and formal presentation of the dissertation proposal is the final component of the PhD Comprehensive Examination. The proposal should present a clear statement of the problem to be investigated, describe how this problem is related to larger issues in the field, briefly review the relevant literature on the problem, and describe the methods that will be used to address the issue. The proposal is usually 10 to 30 double-spaced pages in length. When preparing a research proposal for Departmental approval, students should consider the requirements for submitting proposals to external research granting agencies.

Approving the Dissertation Proposal

Members of the Guidance Committee approve the content and format of the proposal and sign the “Request to Schedule Dissertation Proposal Defense” form (Appendix 10). Appendix 10 and a copy of the dissertation proposal are submitted to the department Graduate Program Coordinator who will forward to the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee for review and approval according to the dates set by the Committee at the beginning of the academic year. The proposal defense must not be scheduled sooner than ten business days after the turn-in date.

The Proposal Defense

The proposal defense is the public presentation of the research proposal. The student provides the Graduate Program Coordinator with a one-page abstract, approved by the Guidance Committee Chair, for distribution. The student will make a short presentation of the proposed research, and there is time for questions from the audience as well as discussion both with the student, and privately among the faculty.

Upon a successful defense, the Guidance Committee signs the “Approval of the Dissertation Proposal” (Appendix 11). The student returns this form, a final copy of the proposal, and a copy of the IRB verification form (Appendix 8), with signed approvals (if required) to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Failure to have these documents on file before beginning dissertation research is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Time Limits for the Written Exam and Proposal

The dissertation proposal can be presented and defended either before or after the student takes the written exams; however, completion of all parts of the Comprehensive Exam must take no longer than two semesters. The University requires that the entire Comprehensive Exam (written exam and defense, and dissertation proposal and defense) must be completed within 5 years of the first course taken for the PhD program.

Once students pass the Comprehensive Examination, they are classified as “doctoral candidates.”

Dissertation

A doctoral dissertation is an original theoretical and/or methodological contribution to the literature of Anthropology. Different Guidance Committees may have different ideas about how a dissertation should be written, and what information it should include in the text or its appendixes.

It is important that the graduate student keep in contact with the members of the Guidance Committee throughout the period of dissertation writing, even if the graduate student is no longer in residence at MSU. A fuller description of dissertation requirements for Anthropology, including expectations for field research and the oral defense of the dissertation, is discussed in [Section 6](#) of this handbook.

The [Academic Programs Catalog](#) requires that PhD students “conduct original research upon which a dissertation which makes a significant contribution to knowledge is to be prepared and published.” For University requirements regarding the dissertation see: [Dissertation and Abstract](#).

Funding Dissertation Research

Funding for dissertation research is often needed for language study, travel, equipment, and analysis of some materials by specialists. Students may also need funding for personal support during fieldwork, analysis, and writing. Applying for external funding is often critical for students in their future job searches, since most organizations (whether academic or not) expect employees to acquire external funding.

Conducting Fieldwork

Students are required to keep in contact with their Guidance Committee Chair during dissertation fieldwork and writing. The best way to avoid problems and conflict is for the student to keep all members of their Guidance Committee informed of their research activities, schedule, plans, and any changes in plans. The Guidance Committee continues to meet formally with the student at least once a year. If students are not conducting research locally, this can be accomplished via a conference call.

In addition to RECR and IRB approval for human subject research ([Section 8](#)), dissertation fieldwork may also require permits or official letters of permission. The Guidance Committee Chair should be able to help the student find out any permit requirements and how to fulfill them. Students must have appropriate permits and approvals before beginning their **doctoral research**.

Writing Up Results and Analysis

As mentioned previously, a doctoral dissertation is an original theoretical and/or methodological contribution to the literature of Anthropology.

The Department Library (335 Baker Hall) and the Archaeology Consortium (McDonel Hall) contains many Anthropology dissertations and theses, which can give the student an idea of how to organize and present various kinds of information and analysis. The [Graduate School's Resource Guide](#) also has a section of practical advice for dissertation-writing. The Graduate School also offers workshops and other sessions designed to help students who are writing their dissertations.

Dissertation Defense

[Section 6](#) (Dissertation Defense and Oral Examination) provides details on the dissertation defense, revisions, and submission of the dissertation.

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

Doctoral students will need to complete annual Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (RECR) trainings. If the student is pursuing a Master's degree along the way of a PhD, then the requirements will count for both programs. For a list of requirements, please review [Section 8](#).

International Students and Language Proficiency

English Language Center (ELC) Services

The ELC conducts applicant screening interviews via Skype and Zoom jointly with senior representatives from participating departments. The aim of the interview is to determine the likelihood of the applicant passing the MSU Speaking Test upon arrival on campus. The Department will request this service on behalf of the student and make arrangements.

Issuing I-20s for Provisional Admission

If international students are admitted on a provisional basis because of language proficiency requirements, they can be issued an I-20 for language studies only. This I-20 is limited to a maximum of 2 years. The student would need to be tested at the English Language Center upon arrival and begin studying in the English level determined by that test. Once the student meets the departmental requirements for language, the student may be issued a degree-seeking I-20. If the student has not met the stated language proficiency requirement for department/program admission at the end of two years, the student cannot continue to enroll for courses.

Provisional admission for international students can be granted **only** for language deficiencies. Regulations will not allow the issuing of an I-20 for provisional admissions for academic reasons.

Residency Requirements

The University requires one year of residency on campus after first enrollment for doctoral credit. A year of residence consists of two consecutive semesters, involving the completion of credits at the level of full-time graduate work each semester. [According to the University](#), a “full-time” student is either enrolled in six credits (PhD) per semester or nine credits (MA) per semester. Graduate students holding a graduate assistantship must enroll in a minimum of 3 credits. Minimum enrollment for doctoral students who have successfully completed all comprehensive exams is 1 credit.

A resident of the State of Michigan may or may not be a student who can receive “in-state tuition” (see [Regulations for Qualifying for In-State Tuition](#)). Basically, once the University classifies you as “out of state” for tuition, that status within the University does not change, no matter how long you live in the state. Students can appeal the University classification; however, the department and faculty have no influence in this classification.

Students with a competitive externally funded (non-MSU) fellowship qualify for “in-state” tuition rates (see [Out-of-State Tuition Waiver](#)). The in-state tuition rate applies only to the semesters during which the student is supported by the fellowship. This policy applies only to grants funded through a competitive process by a US institution/agency/foundation. Funds obtained through non-competitive processes (e.g., need-based fellowships) or from international sources do not qualify the students for in-state tuition rates.

Master’s Degree Requirements

Admissions

We do not accept applications into the Master’s program. This program is only available to current PhD students in Anthropology.

Coursework Requirements (Plan A and B)

Students are required to take 30 credits of coursework. Of these credits, at least 21 credits must be in ANP courses and 16 credits need to be at the 800 level or higher. The following courses are required, and count toward the total 30 credits:

- ANP 830 Cultural and Linguistic Theory
- ANP 840 Biocultural Evolution*

- One methods course (ANP 429, 464, 820, 829, 842, 846, 850, 859)
- Subdiscipline Requirements, which are:
 1. Archaeology: ANP 850 and 854
 2. Medical Anthropology: ANP 834 and 835
 3. Physical (Forensic): ANP 842 and ANTR 541
 4. Sociocultural and Linguistic: no specific requirements

The Department requires a minimum of 30 credits of graduate coursework, including ANP 830 and ANP 840 and a methods course appropriate for the student's subdiscipline, approved by the student's Guidance Committee. Twenty-one of the 30 credits must be earned in Anthropology; 16 must be earned in courses numbered 800 and above. Additional coursework may be required beyond 30 credits by the student's Guidance Committee. The Department requires a grade of no less than 3.0 in each ANP course.

Only 9 credits of the MA degree may count toward the PhD degree.

Plan A

The Plan A degree requires the student to write an approved thesis proposal (Appendix 5), and write and defend a master's thesis (Appendix 6). The student will register for at least 4 credits (and no more than 8 credits) of MA thesis research (ANP 899).

The student will establish a Guidance Committee that consists of at least three faculty members, at least two of which should be from the Department of Anthropology.

If needed, the student must receive Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) training for research and file a research proposal and plan of study that meets the requirements of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before beginning research. The thesis must be formatted according to the guidelines established by the [Graduate School](#).

Plan B

The Plan B degree requires a final evaluation with the student's Guidance Committee. The format and content of the evaluation will be specified by the student's Committee. The student will meet with the Guidance Committee in the spring semester of the second year to review progress and establish the evaluation procedure (Appendix 7). The format and content of the evaluation will be specified by the student's committee.

The student will establish a Guidance Committee that consists of at least three faculty members, at least two of which should be from the Department of Anthropology.

GradPlan (Plan A and B)

[GradPlan](#) helps master's students create and store their degree plans and subsequent graduate program activities. It is where students form their guidance committee, create and update a course list, track RECR, and view and complete their annual research activity guide.

There are a number of resources available online, including a [self-paced training](#) for students, as well as [job aids and overview material](#).

Creating a GradPlan involves completing Appendix 3 and the following sections within the MA Degree Plan process:

- Research Overview - the student answers research questions including thesis topic
- Committee – the student designates committee chair and members
- Course Plan - the student selects master’s program courses
- Annual Review – the student or department uploads the annual review

The student finalizes the Plan and it electronically routes to the Graduate Program Coordinator for review. After this review, it is electronically routed to the Guidance Committee for approval. Following these approvals, the request must be approved by the Graduate Program Director and the College.

Any changes to the Plan or constitution of the Guidance Committee are made electronically and again routed to appropriate members for approval. You can monitor the status of approvals by checking your GradPlan. If you see that approvals are pending you should contact committee members to remind them that your Plan is awaiting their approval.

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (Plan A and B)

Master’s degree students will still need to complete annual Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (RECR) trainings. If the student is pursuing a Master’s degree along the way of a PhD, then the requirements will count for both programs. For a list of requirements, please review [Section 8](#).

Residency Requirements (Plan A and B)

A minimum of 6 credits in the degree program must be earned [in residence](#) on the East Lansing campus or at approved Michigan State University instructional sites.

Graduate/Degree Certification

The semester before the student intends on graduating, they must apply for graduation via [SIS](#).

Important information about dissertation deadlines and submission guidelines can be found on [Graduate School’s website](#). Students should familiarize themselves in advance of graduation to insure that they have adequate time to receive all the necessary approvals.

Graduate Certificates

Graduate certificates can be part of a master’s or doctoral degrees. See [Graduate Certificates](#) for more information regarding offerings.

Transfer Credit

Up to a combined total of 9 credits of graduate coursework at other institutions, courses enrolled with Lifelong Education status, or at the Graduate Certificate level can be transferred. Graduate credit earned elsewhere can either be transferred for credit OR used to waive program requirements. Students must submit course outlines/syllabi and official transcripts showing the

grades received in the courses to the Graduate Office in the department (anpgrad@msu.edu) for review.

Transfer credits no longer start the PhD or MA clock; the PhD or MA clock begins with the student's matriculation into the PhD or MA program.

Summary of Forms, Due Dates, and Time Limits

Forms	Required or Optional	Appendix number	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3/4	Years 5+	Final Year	Time Limit
First Year Plan of Study	Required	1	X					
Annual Activities Report/Graduate Assistantships	Required	2	X	X	X	X	X	
RECR Training Verification	Required	online	X	X	X	X	X	Before comps: Years 1-2 + Discussion Before graduation: Annual Refreshers
Worksheet for the Report of the Guidance Committee	Required	3		X				
Add Non-MSU Faculty to Committee	Optional	4		X				
GradPlan Courses and Committee Formalization*	Required	online		X				End of 2nd year
IRB approval/renewal	Required (some research)	online and 8			X	X	X	Before research
Master's Plan A Thesis Proposal Approval	Optional	5		X				5 years
Master's Plan A Report	Optional	6			X			5 years
Master's Plan B Report	Optional	7			X			5 years
Request to Schedule Comprehensive Exams	Required	9			X			5 years

Request to Schedule Dissertation Proposal Defense	Required	10			X			5 years
Approval of the Dissertation Proposal Defense	Required	11			X			5 years
Record of Comprehensive Exams	Required	20			X			5 years
Dissertation Defense	Required	21					X	8 years
Acceptance/ Submission of Dissertation	Required	online					X	8 years

*Should it become necessary, students can make changes to the membership of the Guidance Committee, including the Chair, through GradPlan.

Doctoral Advisors

First Year Advisor

Each incoming graduate student is assigned a first year advisor based on the faculty's evaluation of the incoming student's research interests. This advisor will help students complete the First Year Plan of Study (Appendix 1) and provide assistance until the student selects a Chair for the Guidance Committee. The first year advisor can be selected as Chair by the student, but need not be.

The Guidance Committee Chair and Dissertation Advisor

By the end of the first year of graduate study, the student selects a faculty member to be the Guidance Committee Chair and Dissertation Advisor. Ideally, the student's Chair is someone with whom the student can establish a mentoring, as well as an advising, relationship. A mentor not only guides the student through the degree program, they also can contribute to the student's intellectual, professional, and personal growth.

When selecting a Guidance Committee Chair and Dissertation Advisor, the student should consider these issues:

- Overlap in research interests and/or geographic area. The advisor should help guide research, arrange fieldwork, and develop a professional network
- A good working relationship. A good mentoring relationship is characterized by mutual respect, trust, understanding, and empathy.
- Other expectations and obligations of faculty members, including number of students.
- What other faculty members at MSU or elsewhere can be relied upon for other aspects of mentoring.

Students are encouraged to collaborate with their advisor to create an individual development plan that considers the student's training, experience, and challenges as well as their ultimate career goals. They should also familiarize themselves with the university's [MSU Guidelines for Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising](#).

The specific responsibilities of the Guidance Committee Chair and Dissertation Advisor include:

- Advising students on preparing for and selecting a thesis or dissertation topic with realistic prospects for success within an appropriate time frame.
- Providing training and oversight regarding the conduct of research, theoretical and technical aspects of the student's research, and professional integrity.
- Providing regular feedback on student progress, including constructive criticism if the student's progress does not meet expectations.
- Helping students develop into successful professionals and colleagues.

Retirement/Emeritus Faculty

If a faculty member retires before the student completes their degree, the retiring faculty member and each of their students must come to an agreement regarding roles and expectations. An emeritus (retired) faculty member can choose to continue to serve as one of the

four required faculty members on a doctoral Guidance Committee, or as the Guidance Committee Chair, with the approval of the Department Chair. The student and the faculty member need to determine whether the faculty member is willing to continue serving on the Guidance Committee or as Chair of the Guidance Committee, and what their role in the graduate student's research will be.

Alternatively, the graduate student may select a new Chair, designate a current faculty member to serve as co-Chair with the retiring faculty member, or replace the retiring faculty member entirely. In general, the University expects that retiring faculty will be done with such advising duties after one year, but the exact length of time is highly variable and depends on individual circumstances.

Departure of Faculty Member

A faculty member who leaves MSU for a job at another institution (that is, who does not have emeritus status) is classified as a faculty member from outside MSU (see discussion in [Section 5](#)).

Doctoral Guidance Committees

Composing the Committee

During the first two semesters of doctoral study, and no later than the third semester in the program, the student must have a fully formed Guidance Committee to assist them in course selection and preparation for research. The Guidance Committee is formalized through GradPlan. Any changes to the composition of the committee are submitted through GradPlan.

Responsibilities of the Guidance Committee include:

- Advising students on course work, research, or other professional activities
- Administering comprehensive examinations and evaluations in a fair and professional manner
- Reviewing and evaluating the thesis or dissertation in a timely, constructive, and critical manner

Committee Layout

The Guidance Committee consists of at least four approved members. The Committee Chairperson and a second committee member must be “regular” tenure-stream faculty members. The third member must also be from the Department’s faculty, but may have either a regular or non-regular appointment in Anthropology. The Department strongly recommends that the fourth committee member be from outside the MSU Department of Anthropology. That individual can be an MSU faculty member or an external member from another university in a discipline that is relevant to the student’s interests and course of studies. If a non-MSU or non-regular (non-tenured) member is added, this must be approved by the College of Social Science and the Dean of the Graduate School. See [procedure for approving non-regular committee members](#), which includes the list of position titles that are eligible for approval by the Graduate School.

Selecting Committee Members

The student has the responsibility to get to know a variety of faculty members within the Department and in related disciplines, either through formal coursework or by participation in informal interactions that accompany social and professional events such as bagged lunch lectures, colloquia, Department-sponsored social events, and other informal interactions. The student can also use faculty office hours to initiate conversations with various faculty members regarding their research interests and ongoing projects.

Students should consult with faculty regarding committee composition; however, if a student elects to remove a member from the committee, advance permission from that person need not be sought. The changes can be made in GradPlan. The Department Chair or the Graduate Program Director can approve changes to committee membership. The student should, however, notify the remaining committee members of the change.

The Department Chair reserves the right to appoint one member. If the student is unable to form a Guidance Committee for any reason, the Department Chair is responsible for intervening to resolve the problem.

Failure to form a complete Guidance Committee by the end of the third semester of graduate study constitutes grounds for termination from the program.

Committee Meetings

Students are required to meet with their entire Guidance Committee at least once each year. The Committee works with the student in completing the Worksheet for the Report of the Guidance committee (Appendix 3) in anticipation of courses being used within GradPlan. The Guidance Committee Chair is responsible for recording minutes of each formal Committee meeting and for providing copies of minutes to all concerned parties and to the Department's Graduate Program Coordinator for the student's departmental file.

Committee Members on Leave

If a student's Guidance Committee Chairperson is temporarily not in residence at Michigan State University, the student must select one resident Committee member to serve as temporary Chair, or co-Chair.

Masters Guidance Committees

The student will establish a Guidance Committee that consists of at least three faculty members, at least two of which should be from the Department of Anthropology.

6. Thesis/Dissertation Defense and Final Oral Examination

The final master's or doctoral examination is the culmination of a student's graduate education and reflects on the accomplishments of the graduate student and the quality of the graduate program. The doctoral dissertation is a sustained analysis and discussion based on original research. The Department expects fieldwork-based dissertations. Alternative kinds of dissertations may be possible, but must be justified and approved by the Guidance Committee in writing.

The Dissertation Defense

After the student has completed research and written a dissertation, in a form approved by the Guidance Committee and in conformity with University regulations, they must successfully defend the dissertation orally before the Guidance Committee, Department faculty, and interested members of the MSU community.

It is expected that the dissertation draft to be defended will be substantially the same as that in the version submitted to the Graduate School. The defended draft of the dissertation will be reasonably free of technical errors in grammar and spelling, and will include all photographs, maps, tables, figures, appendixes, and full bibliographic citations. All Guidance Committee faculty members will receive the same version of the dissertation.

The final oral examination must be scheduled for [a date not earlier than two weeks](#) after the dissertation and abstract have been submitted to the chairperson of the guidance committee, other guidance committee members, and any appointed examiner. The student must be registered during the semester in which the final oral examination is taken.

An electronic copy of the title page and an abbreviated abstract (no more than one page) must be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator at least 5 working days in advance of the defense. This brief abstract is used to publicly announce the dissertation defense.

The format of the PhD dissertation defense usually includes:

- 1) Presentation by the candidate, including such items as research objectives, methodology, findings, and, finally, the conclusions and significance of the dissertation;
- 2) Question and answer period during which the faculty will question the candidate and discuss issues or other matters relevant to the dissertation.

The defense is open to the public, including all other faculty, students, and interested individuals. Anyone may ask questions of the candidate. After the presentation and discussion, everyone except committee members will leave. Only the members of the student's Guidance Committee may vote on the acceptability of the dissertation.

The Department Chairperson technically serves on all doctoral committees, and can elect to attend the dissertation defense or designate a representative. The graduate student who is defending can specifically request that the Department Chair (or representative) attend, or any faculty member in the Department can make this request. If the Department Chair (or representative) does attend the defense, then they also have the right to vote on the acceptability of the dissertation.

The Dean of the College (on their own or at the request of the student, committee member, program director, or unit chairperson) may appoint an outside member to the Guidance

Committee, who would have voting rights as per College policy. The outside member of the committee will read and critique the thesis/dissertation, will participate in the oral part of the exam, and will submit a report to the Dean of the College.

The Department does not allow dissertation defenses during the Summer Session. If there are extreme and extenuating circumstances that make this necessary, this policy can be waived through an agreement with the Guidance Committee and the Chair of the Department.

Revising, Formatting, and Submitting

Revisions to the Dissertation

Following the dissertation defense, the Guidance Committee may require revisions of the dissertation before it is accepted. The Guidance Committee will state in writing how the revisions will be evaluated and approved.

The final version of the dissertation must be approved by the Department of Anthropology, the College of Social Science, and the Graduate School. The student is responsible for completion of all University forms, including the Record of Dissertation and Oral Exam (see Appendix 21).

Format Requirements

Please be sure to obtain an up-to-date guide from the [Graduate School website](#) for the preparation of the final dissertation. The guide provides detailed information regarding formatting and submission procedures.

Submission Deadlines

The [Graduate School's ETD website](#) provides a list of instructions for dissertation submissions, including formatting guides, required paperwork, survey information, and ProQuest account creation. Please review this list carefully and complete each item.

In addition to the main body of a thesis or dissertation, the Graduate School now permits the submission of supplementary materials to ProQuest. These supplemental materials will not be reviewed by the Graduate School for formatting requirements, but they must be acceptable by ProQuest and comply with ProQuest's criteria and storage limits. All supplementary materials need the written approval of the thesis/dissertation committee chair.

Electronic submission deadlines for dissertations can be accessed on the [Graduate School ETD Deadline Dates website](#). Please note that there are two deadlines:

- 1) **Submission Deadline:** Each semester has a [deadline for the initial submission](#) of theses and dissertations to ProQuest. The deadline is generally two weeks prior to the final deadline. Plan your defense accordingly. The document submitted to ProQuest is expected to be a final version, meaning it has been successfully defended, corrections the committee wants have been made, and there are no more content changes. The Graduate School will not accept documents for review for the current semester after 5:00PM ET on the submission deadline date.
- 2) **Final Deadline:** Each semester has a [final deadline](#) where documents have been accepted and delivered for publishing, all required paperwork has been turned in, all milestones have been completed and all degree audits have been completed. Your document must be accepted and delivered to the publisher, ProQuest, by 5:00PM ET on the final deadline date.

The Graduate School accepts only electronic versions of the thesis or dissertation. A submission via ProQuest does not mean that the document has been ACCEPTED. The review process is interactive and can take anywhere from a few hours to weeks, depending upon the extent of the necessary revisions and how diligent the author is when making the necessary revisions.

At the time of submission to ProQuest, authors now have the opportunity to create an ORCID that provides researchers with a unique identifier for linking their research outputs and activities. An ORCID:

- Improves recognition of research contributions
 - Reduces form-filling (enter data once, re-use it often)
 - Works with many institutions, funders, and publishers
 - Is required of many journal manuscript submission systems and grant application forms
- To learn more about ORCID go to: <https://vimeo.com/237730655>

Because your dissertation will be catalogued and available online through the MSU Library (direct access) and also available more widely through ProQuest, the department no longer requires you to submit electronic or paper copies of the dissertation. This is consistent with College and Graduate School requirements.

Enrollment/Graduation Requirements

- 1) A student must be enrolled for at least one credit of ANP 999 during the semester in which they defend the dissertation.
- 2) A student need not be enrolled to turn in final copies of the dissertation if this happens in a semester following the defense.
- 3) [Apply to graduate](#) during the first week of semester in which the student plans to complete all degree requirements. This will ensure that your name is included in the commencement program.
- 4) If you expect to complete your degree requirements during Summer semester, submit this application on or before the end of the first week of Spring semester. This will ensure that your name is included in the Spring commencement program.
- 5) For more information about commencement, please visit their [website](#).
- 6) The forms required for final approval can be found at [ETD final approval form](#).

Doctoral Exit Surveys and Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)

There are two surveys to complete:

- 1) **Graduate School Exit Survey:** Only students who have applied for graduation will have access to this survey. Any questions regarding the survey can be directed to ExitSurvey@grd.msu.edu.
- 2) **Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED):** The registration URL for the survey is: <https://sed-ncses.org>. You will receive an email with a PIN and password as well as the URL to the survey upon registering. Questions about the SED survey may be directed to RTI at sed@rti.org or at 1-877-256-8167.

University Policy Concerning Dissemination of Graduate Students' Research

As a public, land-grant university MSU is committed to advancing knowledge and sharing it publicly. [The university requires](#) an electronic copy of the thesis/dissertation to reside in the MSU library and at least the title and abstract must be published online with ProQuest (see sections [380](#), [400](#) and [402](#) of the Academic Catalog). Sometimes students may wish to put a

hold/embargo on the online publishing of their thesis/dissertation for a brief period of time in order to obtain a patent or submit the work for publication. A request for an embargo of up to 2 years may be made using this [online form](#).

For questions regarding embargoes, please contact the Graduate School at msuetds.approval@grd.msu.edu or at (517) 353-3220.

7. Departmental Policies: Academic and Professional Performance

Standards of performance are set by the Department, the College of Social Science, and the Graduate School of the University. [Academic Programs](#) details the College and Graduate School requirements that are summarized below.

Academic Performance/Grades

The University sets minimum requirements for course grades for graduate students. The Department requires a minimum of 3.0 in each course with an ANP prefix. A student earning lower than a 3.0 in an ANP course must retake the course. Grades lower than 3.0 in cognate courses are acceptable as long as the student's overall grade point average is not below 3.0.

Deferred Grades

If a student is unable to finish the required work of the semester, an instructor may give the student a deferred grade (DF). The student and instructor agree upon a schedule for completion; however, the required work must be completed and a grade reported within 6 months with the option of a single six-month extension. If the required work is not completed within the time limit, the DF will become U-Unfinished and will be changed to DF/U under the numerical and Pass-No Grade (P-N) grading systems, and to DF/NC under the Credit-No Credit (CR-NC) system.

Review of Graduate Student Progress

Students are required to meet at least once each year with their Guidance Committee ([GSRR 2.4.8](#)). In these meetings, all committee members are informed of student's performance, current status in the program, and future plans. Written minutes of this meeting are maintained by the Guidance Committee Chair, and are distributed to each Committee member, the student, and the Department Graduate Program Coordinator, who places it in the student's departmental file.

The progress of every student in the graduate program is reviewed each Spring by the faculty. At the end of every Fall semester, students are required to submit an Annual Activities/Graduate Assistant Application form (Appendix 2) which is signed by their Guidance Committee Chair. All graduate students are required to submit this form. All students, regardless of funding status, must attach supporting documentation for each accomplishment (see [Section 10](#)).

The Department's Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee will collect the following materials for each student:

- "Academic Advisor/Chair Evaluation of Graduate Student" (Appendix 12) completed by the Guidance Committee chair regarding the student's progress and plans.
- Grades during Years 1-2 for each course taken while a graduate student at Michigan State University.
- "Graduate Assistant Evaluation Form" (Appendix 13) completed by instructor or supervisory faculty for those students who have held a graduate assistantship (TA or RA) in the Department during the past year.
- "Instructor's Student Evaluation form" (Appendix 14) completed by the instructors for all first and second-year graduate students in Anthropology courses (400-level and above).

These materials are reviewed by the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee, which makes recommendations to the full faculty for action. Based upon the documents mentioned above as well as other pertinent data, the full faculty reviews the academic progress of each student according to the established rubric (see [Section 1](#)). The result of this review is reported to the student in an evaluation letter from the Department Chair. If there are serious questions about the student's ability to make satisfactory progress in the program, the student will be informed at this time.

Graduate students who wish to appeal any part of the evaluation should do so in writing to the Department Chair, and this appeal will be included with the evaluation in the graduate student's file.

Graduate students are required to comply with any specific action or requirement specified in the evaluation letter within the time span dictated. **Failure to comply with any Department requirement or deadline is grounds for dismissal from the program.** All policies concerning access, maintenance, and release of students' records must follow University guidelines in the [MSU Access to Student Information policy](#).

The Graduate Student File

The Department Graduate Program Coordinator maintains a file for each student. The file contains records concerning each student's program, including program plans, the list of members of the Guidance Committee, annual review letters, thesis proposals, funding information, grades and evaluations, grant proposals or funding requests, and results of the Comprehensive Exam.

Other than confidential reference letters (to which the student has waived access), the student should have their own copies of all letters and forms that are in their Department file. Students can make an appointment with the Graduate Program Coordinator to review their file at any time.

For teaching assistants, a separate personnel file is kept as prescribed by the GEU/MSU contract. Additionally, all other employment files will be kept in a personnel file as required by HR and the Records Management team.

Other Departmental Policies Review of Student Materials

Drafts of bibliographies, proposals, and dissertation chapters should be submitted to committee members. The faculty is committed to respond to drafts within two weeks unless they have notified the student in advance.

Degree Time Limits

The University, Graduate School, and College of Social Science have set the following time limits:

- The Master's degree (Plan A or Plan B) must be completed within **five** calendar years from the date of matriculation into the Master's degree program.
- Comprehensive Examinations for the PhD degree must be taken within **five** years from the date of matriculation into the PhD degree program.
- All remaining requirements for the degree, including the dissertation, must be completed within **eight** years from the date of matriculation into the PhD program.

Extensions

[Time Limit Extensions](#) for the master's degree and the doctoral degree are difficult to obtain and must be approved by the Graduate Program Director, the Department Chair, the College of Social Sciences, and the Graduate School. The Graduate School will allow **one** extension for only a specific time period, normally no longer than one year. The extension will include a specific time frame for each remaining requirement. If students choose not to enroll for some period, they need to be aware that this does NOT 'stop the clock' and they remain subject to the degree time limits.

Procedures for extensions:

- Applications for extensions of the **five**-year period of time to complete either the MA degree or comprehensive exams must be submitted by the Graduate Program Director for approval by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the College of Social Sciences and the Dean of the Graduate School.
- Applications for extensions of the **eight**-year period of time toward degree must be submitted by the Graduate Program Director for approval by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the College of Social Sciences and the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon approval of the extension, doctoral comprehensive examinations must be passed again. Generally, the students' Guidance Committee crafts a comprehensive exam retake as part of the dissertation review and defense process.

Program Termination Guidelines

The following are the criteria that are used for dismissals due to academic deficiencies.

- 1) Failure to constitute a full graduate Guidance Committee.
- 2) Failure to meet Departmental requirements outlined in this handbook within the time frames stipulated.
- 3) Failure to maintain the necessary GPA required for the program and the College.
- 4) Failure to successfully pass comprehensive exams after two attempts.
- 5) Failure to fulfill a requirement or meet a stated deadline stipulated in writing by the student's Guidance Committee, or the members of the faculty as a whole, or the Department Chair.

Students will receive written notification when they are in violation of the Departmental requirements. They must meet with their advisor and Graduate Program Director in order to create a plan to rectify the situation. Failure to meet or to fulfill agreed upon plan are grounds from dismissal from the program.

Graduate Assistantship Termination Guidelines

Graduate Assistantships are evaluated every semester using the Graduate Assistant Evaluation Form (Appendix 13). Students receiving poor reviews will be notified to meet with their supervisor, the Graduate Program Director, and the Department Chair. A plan will be agreed upon to improve student performance.

Students with more than two unsatisfactory evaluations in consecutive semesters will be considered in poor academic standing.

For policies regarding dismissal from Teaching Assistantships, please refer to the [GEU Contract](#).

Early Termination or Resignation of Assistantships

If a graduate assistant resigns an assistantship or the assistantship is terminated early during a semester, such that the appointment does not meet minimum duration standards (53 calendar days in Fall and Spring; 46 calendar days in Summer), the student will be assessed tuition for all credits carried, and those who are not Michigan (in-state) residents will be assessed out-of-state tuition or international tuition.

Readmission Procedure

Graduate students whose enrollment at Michigan State University is interrupted for any reason so that they have not been enrolled for three consecutive semesters, including the summer sessions, must apply for [readmission](#) via the web at www.reg.msu.edu at least two months prior to the first day of registration for the semester in which the student expects to resume graduate studies. Faculty will evaluate the application to determine admission.

Grief and Bereavement Policy

The Department recognizes the need to accommodate the bereavement process of a student who has lost a family member or who is experiencing emotional distress from a similar tragedy so that the student is not academically disadvantaged in their classes or other academic work (see [Grief Absence Policy](#)). <https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/GriefAbsence.aspx>

For master's (Plan A), master's (Plan B) with research responsibilities, and doctoral students, it is the responsibility of the student to:

- 1) Notify their advisor/major professor and faculty of the courses in which they are enrolled of the need for a grief absence in a timely manner, but no later than one week from the student's initial knowledge of the situation.
- 2) Provide appropriate verification of the grief absence as specified by the advisor/major professor and faculty.
- 3) Complete all missed work as determined in consultation with the advisor/major professor and faculty.

It is the responsibility of the advisor/major professor to:

- 1) Determine with the student the expected period of absence – it is expected that some bereavement processes may be more extensive than others depending on individual circumstances
- 2) Receive verification of the authenticity of a grief absence request upon the student's return
- 3) Make reasonable accommodations so that the student is not penalized due to a verified grief absence.

If employed as a RA or TE, the graduate student must also notify the Department Chair. Both the Department Chair and student will swiftly communicate to determine how the student's responsibilities will be covered during their absence. Graduate teaching assistants (TAs) should refer to the bereavement policy in the [MSU GEU CBU Article 18](#).

8. Departmental Policies: Integrity and Safety in Research and Creative Activities

The [Graduate School's Research Integrity Requirements](#) as well as the [American Anthropological Association Code of Ethics](#) are important guides for all graduate students and faculty. Students should also be aware of other resources regarding ethical behavior in general and the standards expected in their subfield ([Archaeology](#), Biological, [Forensics](#), Linguistics, and Medical). Unethical or dishonest behavior while engaged in research, scholarly, and creative activities can result in dismissal from the program.

University Policies

Please review the [Procedures Concerning Allegations of Misconduct in Research and Creative Activities](#). The [Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research](#) requirements (detailed below) focus on this and other aspects of professionalism.

Additional information on laboratory and campus safety can be found on the [MSU Campus Safety website](#) and the [Office of Environmental Health & Safety \(EHS\) website](#). The MSU Police Department has also developed [Safety Guidelines for an Active Shooter Situation](#).

All graduate and professional students are required to complete online [Relationship Violence & Sexual Misconduct \(RVSM\) prevention training](#). The online training course will be assigned to all graduate and professional students during their first semester at MSU and a refresher course will be assigned to be completed every 24 months thereafter.

As part of the responsible training in research, students should acquaint themselves with authorship practices within their particular subfield. Students should review the [MSU Guidelines on Authorship](#). Similarly, students need to confer with faculty related to their research regarding the best practices regarding data storage. Students should review [MSU's Institutional Data Policy](#).

Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

Integrity is foundational to our research, scholarship, creative work, and core identity as MSU Spartans. It is not only required by rules (including federal, state, research sponsors, and MSU's [research](#) and [training](#) policies), integrity is essential for our research to have legitimacy and impact. Research integrity is so important to our development as scholars and creators that the Graduate School has developed minimum education requirements for all graduate students regarding the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (RECR for short). RECR training is also a federal requirement for all graduate students and completion of the training must be tracked. All ANP graduate students must complete the RECR requirements set by the [Graduate School](#).

Students can access these trainings through [Ability](#) and [CITI](#).

Summary of RECR Requirements

The Graduate School's RECR education program consists of two parts (a) basic or foundational education (Years One and Two, for all Master's and Ph.D. students), and (b) annual refresher education (Years three and beyond, for Ph.D. students only).

Master's Plan B	Master's Plan A	Doctoral
CITI Modules Year 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research • Authorship • Plagiarism • Research Misconduct 	CITI Modules Year 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research • Authorship • Plagiarism • Research Misconduct 	CITI Modules Year 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research • Authorship • Plagiarism • Research Misconduct
6 hours discussion-based education (complete before graduation)	6 hours discussion-based education (complete before graduation)	6 hours discussion-based education (complete before finishing comprehensive examination and entering candidacy status)
	CITI Modules Year 2 Complete 3 of 6 possible RECR Basic modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Research • Conflicts of Interest • Data Management • Mentoring • Peer Review • Financial Responsibility 	CITI Modules Year 2 Complete 3 of 6 possible RECR Basic modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Research • Conflicts of Interest • Data Management • Mentoring • Peer Review • Financial Responsibility
		Year 3 forward 3 hours of annual refresher education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITI modules not previously taken to fulfill Year 1 or 2 or another refresher year's requirements • Department/College Workshops, brown-bag luncheons, group discussions that cover RECR related topics • Graduate School RECR workshops not previously taken • One-on-one discussions between the student and their advisor • Other RECR related courses (non-CITI modules, Academic courses, etc.)

The Department of Anthropology and College of Social Science offer several options for students to fulfill these requirements. The [Graduate School RECR Workshop series](#) may be used to help fulfill both the annual refresher and discussion-based training requirements.

Other Requirements

Please note that in addition to these requirements, certain funding agencies may require researchers to obtain additional specific training for their grant. Students must meet the timeline and content requirements of training for that grant.

Department Training Options

In addition to the training requirements above, department and university training options are also available and can be fulfilled in several ways, by combining various options.

- ANP Graduate Workshop (2 Hours). In spring semester, the Department of Anthropology holds a Graduate Workshop that includes significant RECR content. This workshop is required of all first year students, but others may choose to attend.
- Initial IRB Training (2 Hours). MSU's [Human Research Protection Program \(HRPP\)](#) requires completion of an online tutorial for individuals receiving IRB approval to conduct research at MSU.
- CITI (Collaborate Institutional Training Initiative) Modules. MSU is licensed to access [CITI modules](#). There are several modules to choose from. These modules are also required by the HRPP for renewal of their educational requirements.
- Select ANP Graduate Courses with RECR Content (4 Hours). The following ANP graduate courses have significant RECR content: ANP 829 Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology; ANP 870 Professional Issues in Anthropology; or ANP 850 Principles of Archaeological Analysis.
- Selected ANP Bagged Lunch Presentations with RECR Content (up to 3 Hours). The ANP Colloquium Series will include at least one presentation each semester that will count toward the RECR requirement. Students may receive one (1) hour RECR credit for each RECR-designated colloquium, for a total of three (3) hours annually of the ANP RECR requirements.
- RECR Discussion with student's Graduate Advisor (1 Hour). Students are encouraged to **meet at least one hour face-to-face with their graduate advisor each year** to discuss Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research topics as part of their annual RCR training requirement.

Research with Human Subjects or Animals

Federal and University regulations require that all research projects involving human subjects be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to assure the ethical conduct of research and the protection of human subjects.

MSU's IRB process is overseen and conducted by MSU's [Human Research Protection Program \(HRPP\)](#). Under the regulations, [research is defined](#) as a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. A human subject of research is an individual from whom an investigator obtains data by interaction or intervention or about whom the researcher obtains confidential information or biospecimens.

The IACUC reviews, approves & oversees all MSU programs involving the care & use of all live animal activities to ensure compliance with standards & regulatory requirements. By law, MSU

faculty, staff, and students must abide by the IACUC protocol review, project approvals, and post-approval monitoring to ensure standards of care and management.

In accordance with federal regulations, MSU requires that all graduate students engaged in research involving human subjects or animal use must complete the Michigan State University training modules for those subjects before submitting [IRB](#) or [IACUC](#) approvals. These modules may be completed as part of the training requirements listed above, or in addition to them, depending on the department/program or college plan.

IRB Research Approval

Anthropology students whose research involves human subjects must obtain IRB approval for their project from MSU's HRPP **PRIOR** to initiating data collection. Application materials are available on the [CLICK Compliance System](#) on the [HRPP website](#). Your graduate advisor will need to approve and submit the application under their name, and will appear as the PI (Principle Investigator) on the application and approval.

Prior to beginning dissertation research, the student must submit Appendix 8 and a copy of the IRB Approval Letter to the Department's Graduate Program Coordinator.

Failure to obtain and comply with IRB approval for research with human subjects is considered grounds for dismissal of a student from the program.

IACUC Research Approval

Anthropology students whose research involves animals must obtain IACUC approval for their project from MSU's Animal Care Program **PRIOR** to initiating data collection. Application materials are available on the [CLICK Compliance System](#) on the [Animal Care Program website](#). Your graduate advisor will need to approve and submit the application under their name, and will appear as the PI (Principle Investigator) on the application and approval.

Prior to beginning dissertation research, the student must submit Appendix 8 and a copy of the IACUC Approval Letter to the Department's Graduate Program Coordinator.

Failure to obtain and comply with IACUC approval for research with animals is considered grounds for dismissal of a student from the program.

Academic Misconduct

Students should review the [University's Integrity of Scholarship and Grades Policy](#). The Graduate School also details the process for [Academic Dishonesty Reports \(ADR\)](#).

9. Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution

The department utilizes the University's policy based on the [Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities \(Article 1\)](#).

Conflicts with Advisor

In the event of a conflict between a student and the advisor, the student should speak with the Graduate Program Director. The main advisor can be changed with the consent of the Graduate Program Director.

Resolving Problems

The key to avoiding conflict is to maintain communication between faculty and student, and to ensure that the Departmental requirements are explicit and are fairly applied to all graduate students. The Department has in place certain rules and procedures to ensure at least minimal standards of communication and to prevent potential conflicts between students and their faculty mentors. These include:

- Annual meeting of the Guidance Committee which includes written summaries that are placed in the student's file.
- Requirement that any additional requirements be formally communicated in writing to the student.
- Regular communication between the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee and a student's Guidance Committee.

The University has established a judicial structure and process for hearing and adjudicating alleged violations of recognized graduate student rights and responsibilities. The department has agreed to follow this process which can be found on the [Office of the University Ombudsperson website](#).

While it is always best to avoid problems where possible, if a serious problem does arise, the first step to resolve it is within the Department. The Department Chair is the student's first resource for advice on avoiding a potential conflict, or on how to deal with a problem among students and between students and faculty. In the event that the student wishes to seek informal advice without involving the Department Chair, or in cases where the student's problem concerns actions of the Department Chair, students should consult with their Guidance Committee Chair, the Graduate Program Director, and/or the Chair of the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee.

It may also be to your benefit to consult the [University Ombudsperson website](#) for resources and additional information.

Conflicts of Interest

There are various ways in which students and faculty can have conflicts of interest that may affect the integrity of research; these may be personal relationships, financial interests that could affect grants or projects, or anything else that might bias a faculty or student's perspective. [The Graduate School](#) has an outline of a number of these issues that are especially relevant for graduate students.

Whether or not a student has a conflict of interest, it is always a good policy to consider potential conflicts of interest prior to beginning any research project.

Professional Expectations and Dismissal Criteria

Responsible and ethical conduct of all scholarly and a research activity is expected of all graduate students, and failure to adhere to these expectations is grounds for dismissal from the graduate program.

Some specific examples that are grounds for dismissal include:

- Failure to obtain IRB approval before beginning a research program involving human subjects.
- Plagiarism in any form in classes, degree requirements, or scholarly work.
- Dishonesty regarding grades or any academic record.
- Dishonesty regarding research protocol, methodology, findings, and reporting.
- Dishonesty regarding financial aid, or application for and use of grant money.

Failure to adhere to the basic standards of professional behavior and standards of integrity in scholarship and research as established by the discipline of Anthropology, as set forth in documents for the discipline as a whole by the American Anthropological Association and for the various subdisciplines, is grounds for dismissal from the graduate program in Anthropology at MSU. Termination from the graduate program of the Department of Anthropology will become official when the student is so notified in writing by the Department Chairperson. More information regarding dismissal can be found in the [Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

10. Work Related Policies

There are several opportunities for graduate assistantships, including teaching and research assistantships, in the Department. Additional research assistantships funded by individual professors' research grants may also be available; these are awarded at that professor's discretion.

Graduate student teaching assistants are covered by the [MSU-Graduate Employees Union \(GEU\) Contract](#). Students and faculty both have the responsibility of becoming familiar with the major issues covered in the contract.

Applying for an Assistantship

Every year, students must complete the Annual Activities Report/Graduate Assistant Application form (Appendix 2). This form is due each January and reports on students' activities for the preceding calendar year. All students must supply supporting documentation for claimed activities.

Students who have completed their Anthropology Fellowship must apply for graduate assistantships through the Department to be eligible to receive a teaching or research assistantship from either the Department of Anthropology or from Integrative Studies in Social Sciences (ISS).

Students unsure of their eligibility for an assistantship for the next year should apply regardless. Sometimes extra funds for teaching assistantships or research assistantships become available later in time, and the Department will only fund students who have completed the Annual Activities Report/Graduate Assistant Application form.

Evaluation Criteria

Graduate Assistantships in the Department are awarded on the basis of merit, including progress through the graduate program in alignment with [Article 4 of GSRR](#). Students are divided into five groups, or cohorts: first year; second year; third year; fourth year; and post-fieldwork students.

The Department's annual review of graduate students provides the framework for decisions about graduate assistantships. The faculty use evaluation results to determine separate rankings for each student cohort. Only students who apply for assistantships for the coming year will be ranked.

The primary criteria concern academic achievement in the graduate program. Primary criteria include:

- Overall GPA
- Grades in Anthropology courses
- Faculty evaluation letters
- Successful completion of required courses

Secondary criteria include accomplishments such as grant activities, publications, and presentations at professional meetings. The faculty is aware that students differ in their prior experience and education, and general expectations for students will vary according to their background and their year in the program at MSU. In particular, the more advanced the

student, the more the faculty expects to see evidence of scholarly activities noted on the Annual Activities Report/Graduate Assistant Application form (Appendix 2).

Priorities for Funding

Students may expect four years of departmental funding prior to dissertation fieldwork and completion.

Incoming students may be eligible for funding packages such as the University Distinguished Fellowships (UDF), Foreign Language Areas Studies (FLAS) fellowships), and Anthropology Department fellowships.

Graduate Assistant Responsibilities

Assistantships are most commonly expressed as 1/4 time or 1/2 time. “Quarter time” assistantships carry a workload averaging 10 hours/week; “half time” assistantships average 20 hour/week workloads. Graduate teaching assistants should be familiar with the GEU contract, and the sections on rights, workload, and performance requirements are particularly applicable to this issue.

Teaching Assistant (TA) duties vary, depending on the class level, class size, subject matter, and personal preferences of the instructor. Teaching Assistants are usually expected to attend lectures and to keep up with the assigned readings, as well as assist the instructor. They may assist with test writing, grading, preparing handouts, and lecturing. They may be expected to hold regular office hours and/or review sessions. Lead TAs may serve as the primary or only instructor for a course. It is essential that the TA and the primary instructor discuss and agree on the TA’s role and responsibilities for a particular class.

A graduate student Research Assistant (RA) will work with a professor on some aspect of ongoing research. Research Assistants may code data, draft figures, do analysis, and/or be involved in writing. Some of this work may overlap with the student’s thesis or dissertation research. It is therefore crucial that the graduate student and professor discuss and agree on the student’s duties regarding the assistantship as well as the research project as a whole.

Levels and Compensation

Teaching Assistants

There are three levels of Graduate Teaching Assistantships:

- Level 1: graduate student, bachelor’s degree and less than one academic year’s experience as a graduate assistant or as full-support fellow.
- Level 2: graduate student, relevant master’s degree (30 semester credits) and/or two semesters’ experience as a graduate **teaching** assistant.
- Level 3: graduate student, relevant master’s degree or equivalent (30 semester credits), six semesters of experience as a graduate **teaching** assistant (including summers).

Information regarding Teaching Assistant compensation can be found in the [GEU Contract](#) and on the [MSU HR website](#).

Research Assistants

There are three levels of Graduate Research Assistantships:

- Level 1: graduate student, bachelor’s degree and less than one academic year’s experience as a graduate assistant or as full-support fellow.

- Level 2: graduate student, relevant master's degree (30 semester credits) and/or two semesters' experience as a graduate **research** assistant.
- Level 3: graduate student, successful completion of doctoral comprehensive exams (as defined by the department in which the student is enrolled), six semesters of experience as a graduate **research** assistant (including summers).

Information regarding Research Assistant compensation can be found on the [MSU HR website](#). Please note that the department pays Research Assistants at the same rate as Teaching Assistants.

Graduate Assistant Evaluations

Graduate Assistants (both TA and RA) are evaluated each semester by supervising faculty (Appendix 13) and these written evaluations are placed in the student files. Reappointment to RA and GA positions are dependent on the satisfactory completion of assignments as well as remaining in good standing in the graduate program (see [Section 7](#)). For reappointment and dismissal, the department follows the terms stipulated in the Graduate Employment Union contract (see [Article 19](#) in current GEU contract).

Leaves and Absences

Graduate assistants need to work with the faculty member for whom they are assisting to cover any absences during the semester for both personal and professional reasons.

Teaching Assistants should refer to the following policies from the Article 18 in the GEU Contract:

- [Medical leave](#)
- [Jury duty](#)
- [Grief and bereavement](#)

Research Assistants should refer to the following policies from the Academic Programs Catalog:

- [Medical leave](#)
- [Grief and bereavement](#) (also, [Section 7](#))

Conflicts

In the event of any problems or confusion, the TA should seek help from the Department Chair first to see if the problem can be resolved informally within the Department. Students who are teaching assistants for ISS courses (that are taught by members of the department) are in fact employees of the Department of Anthropology, and should ask the Department Chair for assistance if a problem arises.

Benefits

More information on University Assistantships including additional benefits and health care coverage is available through the [Graduate School website](#).

Disability Accommodations for Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistants (RAs, TAs, and TEs) are both students and employees. They are thus eligible for disability accommodations in both of these roles, and these accommodations are provided through distinct documents coordinated by RCPD. Graduate assistants can register for both situations using [RCPD's MyProfile portal](#).

Student Status and Enrollment during Assistantship

The University requires that graduate assistants with a half time or quarter time appointments must enroll for at least six credits (MA students) and 3 credits (PhD students) per semester to be considered a full time student, unless the student is a doctoral candidate. Students who have successfully completed all portions of the comprehensive exams (including dissertation proposal) only have to register for one credit of ANP 999 per university guidelines.

Please note: the Department requires the completion of the dissertation proposal in addition to the comprehensive oral examination before a student is considered a doctoral candidate. Both requirements must be met before submitting the University required form: Record of Comprehensive Examinations (Appendix 20).

Resources for Graduate Assistants

Equipment and Supplies

The Department administers some resources for graduate assistants, including office space or laboratory space, access to computers, internet access, mailboxes, and office supplies. These are dependent on the specifics of the assignment. The graduate assistant should clarify these issues with the faculty supervisor as well as the Departmental office staff.

D2L

D2L is the course management system used by MSU for courses. The Department administrator will provide privileges for the system each semester. Students need to coordinate with faculty members of record regarding the use and expectations of the course management system. For more information on using D2L, teaching assistants should review the [D2L Help page](#).

Trainings

The Graduate School offers [Professional Development training](#) for teaching assistants in teaching skills, classroom management, and other aspects of teaching. The Graduate School also offers a [Certification in College Teaching](#).

International Teaching Assistants

Students who are eligible for TA appointments who were required to demonstrate English proficiency as a condition for regular admission to Michigan State University must also demonstrate that they meet a minimum standard of proficiency in spoken English before they can be assigned teaching work that involves oral communication with undergraduate students.

International teaching assistants (ITAs) may meet this [requirement](#) in one of the following ways:

- Presenting a valid TOEFL iBT speaking section score of 27 or higher
- Receiving a score of 50 or higher on the [MSU Speaking Test](#)
- Taking [AAE 451](#) or [AAE 452](#) (ITA language support courses) AND receiving a score of 50 or higher on the [ITA Oral Interaction Test \(ITAOI\)](#).

Individual exceptions from these requirements (on a case-by-case basis in rare circumstances) will be considered by the Graduate School in consultation with the English Language Center (ELC) upon the request of the department and with the endorsement of the Associate Dean of the College.

Outside Work for Pay

Students should consult with the Department (Graduate Program Coordinator/Graduate Program Director) regarding outside work for pay.

Procedures for Domestic and International Travel

It is required that graduate students submit travel requests for both [domestic](#) and [international](#) travel if they are traveling for university business (including research data collection, professional conferences, courses, or other academic business). Students should inform their advisor of any MSU-related travel. Personal travel/vacation does not need to be entered into these systems.

Please keep in mind that unauthorized travel can lead to disqualification of any data collected. It is imperative that you follow University guidelines for travel so that you (1) are insured and (2) are authorized to use the data collected for your dissertation.

International Travel	Domestic Travel
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Register with the Global Travel Registry.2. Register with Concur (in EBS).	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Register with Concur (in EBS).

Check the [International Studies and Programs website](#) for issues related to safety around the world. The [MSU Travel Clinic](#) will let you know of any health risks or required immunizations.

International students should review the [OISS Immigration Alerts](#) and make an appointment with their [OISS advisor](#) to discuss any questions or concerns about traveling.

Funding Opportunities

The student's Guidance Committee is the best source of information regarding sources of funding in the student's geographic area and specialty. The [Graduate School](#) also has information regarding funding, and the [MSU Library](#) maintains an online list of grant sources.

Grant applications for field research involving human subjects require proof of IRB approval. This approval must be obtained before the grant can be submitted.

The Department's Business Manager and the Graduate Program Coordinator must have a copy of any grant proposal that you submit.

Processes

Students should never submit any proposal without the express agreement and knowledge of their [Guidance Committee Chair](#). [Guidance Committee members](#) should also be informed about proposal submission plans.

Additionally, all internal funding applications should first route through the [Graduate Program Director](#) and [Graduate Program Coordinator](#).

The [Department's Business Manager](#) can help provide budget information that may be required for grant preparation.

Some students are funded via fellowships or programs such as Fulbright, and students should follow the appropriate requirements and permissions for these programs. Usually, approval of the Dean of International Studies and Programs (ISP) is required.

All funding proposals must have approvals and signatures from units within the University. For agencies such as National Science Foundation (NSF), Wenner Gren, National Institute of Health (NIH), and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Department Chair, the Associate Research Dean of the College of Social Sciences, and the Office of Sponsored Programs must approve the proposal and budget. Most proposals require the signature of the Guidance Committee Chair, and many are submitted in their name with the student as the co-principal investigator. Any proposals for international research require the signature of the Dean of International Studies and Programs.

Department Funding

Graduate Assistantships

Students are admitted into the PhD program with a promise of 4 or 5 years of funding, depending on the funding source. This funding can be from the Department, College, Graduate School, or University, and is often in the form of a graduate assistantship within the Department. Up to year 5, if the student is on track with all program requirements as shown in the timeline ([p. 5](#)), that student is “in good standing” in the program. Funding beyond these years is not guaranteed, but may be available, dependent on student progress and availability of funds.

Scholarships

The Department’s scholarship offerings vary based on the status of the scholarship accounts. Some scholarships are endowment-based and others are donation-based.

Here is a list of some Department scholarships:

- Altimore Professional Development Scholarship
- Alumni & Friends Fund for Archeology
- Lynne Goldstein Fellowship Fund
- Peter J. Bertocci Anthropology Scholarship
- Whiteford Cultural Anthropology Field Work Scholarship
- William A. Lovis Research Fund in Environmental Archaeology

Please note that these may not be available every year. For a current list of scholarships, please visit our [Scholarships page](#).

Graduate Office Fellowship (GOF) Funds

The Graduate School allocates GOF funds to each College, which then allocates funds to each unit. These funds can be used for a few reasons, but they are primarily used for conference travel, dissertation research, and emergency purposes. Each Fall, the Department will announce a call for applications to receive these funds. The amount received each year is variable and is at the College’s and Graduate School’s discretion. There may be additional calls for applications in the Spring.

Campus Archaeology Program (CAP)

The Campus Archaeology Program allows graduate and undergraduate students to obtain hands-on experience conducting archaeological and archival research on campus history. Students have the opportunity to work as summer field techs for hourly pay, and/or as fellows during the academic year on a small stipend. In addition, senior graduate students have the

opportunity to serve as Campus Archaeology for a 1-3 year period of time. Fellows, field techs, and the Campus Archaeologist are selected at the discretion of the Campus Archaeology Program, who is currently Dr. Stacey L. Camp. Preference is given to students who have field experience and have worked successfully with CAP in past years.

[Cultural Heritage Informatics \(CHI\) Initiative](#)

Administered by the Department of Anthropology in partnership with the Lab for Educational Advancement in Digital Research, the Cultural Heritage Informatics Initiative supports efforts that equip students with the skills and experience to thoughtfully apply digital methods and computational approaches to cultural heritage materials, collections, data, challenges, and questions. Anthropology Graduate students have opportunities to work on digital humanities projects through the CHI Fellowship program.

College of Social Science

The current College of Social Science funding opportunities can be reviewed on their [website](#).

Here is a list of commonly offered awards:

- The Charles Bates Scholarship in the Social Science
- The Charles P. and Linda A. Thompson Endowment for Social Science Research
- College of Social Science (CSS) Research Scholars Award
- Kenneth E. Corey Research Enrichment Fund

Graduate School/University

Some grants or fellowships may be available through the [Graduate School](#).

Here is a list of commonly offered awards:

- [COGS Disciplinary Leadership Award](#)
- [COGS Diversity Equity and Inclusion Award](#)
- [Dissertation Completion Fellowship](#)
- [Emergency Funding](#)
- [Research Enhancement](#)
- [Travel Funding](#)
- [University Distinguished Fellowship \(UDF\)](#)

Other Units

Other units on campus may offer fellowships, assistantships, or other awards that students may be eligible for. Here is a list of some awards that students have received in the past:

- [Asian Pacific American Studies Program Fellowships](#)
- Assistantships with:
 - Anatomy
 - MSU Press
- [Environmental Science and Policy Program Funding](#)
- [Foreign Language and Area Studies \(FLAS\)](#)
 - [African Studies Center](#)
 - [Asian Studies Center](#)
 - [Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies](#)
- [GenCen Fellowships](#)
- [International Studies & Programs](#)
- [OISS Funding](#)

External

There are many external grants that students apply for to support their graduate research. The granting agencies themselves are available to answer questions about whether a particular project would be fundable by that agency, and what budget items may or may not be approved. Applicants are expected to call or email the appropriate agency Program Officer with these sorts of questions.

Here is a list of some grants that students may be eligible for:

- [American Association of University Women](#)
 - [AAUW American Dissertation Fellowship](#)
- [Boren Awards](#)
- [Fulbright IIE](#)
- [Fulbright US Student Program](#)
- [National Academy of Education/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship](#)
- [National Endowment for the Humanities \(NEH\)](#)
- [National Institute of Health \(NIH\)](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#)
 - [Graduate Research Fellowship Program](#)
- [Wenner Gren Foundation](#)

Department Resources

In addition to a student's advisor and Guidance Committee, several individuals and committees in the Department share responsibility for the quality of scholarship and graduate education.

The Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC)

The Department's Graduate Program Coordinator keeps graduate student records and can answer procedural questions. Students may access all except the confidential sections of their files. Students should check periodically with the Graduate Program Coordinator to make sure their files are current.

Students are responsible for updating their GradPlan and informing the Graduate Program Coordinator of any changes in the composition of their Guidance Committee or changes in courses approved by the Guidance Committee. Students will make the necessary changes in GradPlan and these will route electronically for approvals.

Students should also make sure that the Graduate Program Coordinator has a copy of any required research-related documents in the student's file: documents such as a copy of the student's research bibliography, the research proposal (for master's thesis or dissertation research), any grant proposals, any research approvals or permits, and also a copy of the completed master's thesis.

The Graduate Program Coordinator also assists students in completing the proper paperwork or electronic process for changes in student status (for example, advancement to PhD candidacy) and in applying for graduation. The Graduate Program Coordinator ensures that University and Departmental forms in GradPlan are completed correctly.

The email for the Graduate Program Coordinator is: ANPGrad@msu.edu.

The Department Graduate Program Director (GPD)

The role of Graduate Program Director is to facilitate communication about rules, procedures, financial support, and other issues between the graduate students, Department, College, and University. This person is a resource for information regarding how University and Graduate School policy impacts the Anthropology graduate program in general.

The Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee (GCPC)

This committee is the faculty oversight committee responsible for hearing petitions, prioritizing students for graduate assistantships, and for assuring equity among student programs. One graduate student serves as the graduate student representative to this committee. Any student may bring a matter before the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee by notifying the graduate student representative to the Committee or the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee Chairperson.

The Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee is particularly relevant during the annual reviews of graduate student progress, when the Committee utilizes the information provided by the faculty instructors, supervisors, and advisors, together with the information provided by the student, to evaluate student progress in the program and to recommend students for graduate assistantships.

In addition, the Graduate Curriculum and Programs Committee:

- Verifies that the bibliographies adhere to common Departmental standards.
- Verifies that the student has obtained the signatures required to schedule comps or proposal defense.

The Department Business Manager

The Department's Business Manager is an important resource regarding financial requirements and procedures used by the Department, College and the University. This information is particularly relevant to graduate students who are writing grants and fellowship applications, or who are employed in the Department. The Department Business Manager also hires student staff for office and other work as the need arises.

The Department Chair

The Chair is responsible for both fiscal and academic standards as well as program integrity, and is thus ultimately responsible for Department programs, including the graduate program. The Chair works to bring the Department together and acts as a liaison between the College and the Department. The Chair also serves ex-officio on all graduate student committees.

The Department Associate Chair

As Associate Chair, this person assumes the responsibilities of the Chair in the Chair's absence and manages course scheduling for the Department. This person facilitates communication regarding College and University policies, procedures and rules for undergraduate education.

MSU Ombudsperson

MSU's Ombudsperson acts as a liaison or mediator for students if they need advice or help in resolving a problem within the department, and can identify where to find more information. Students should consult their advisors or the Department Chair first; however, students may consult the Ombudsperson to help resolve problems before they get to the point of requiring attention outside the department.

The email for the Ombudsperson is: ombud@msu.edu.

For more information, please visit the [Office of the University Ombudsperson website](#).

The Department Office (355 Baker Hall)

The Department's main office, as well as many faculty offices, is on the third floor of Baker Hall. Many TA offices are on the 4th floor of Baker or in McDonel Hall. The Department's copiers, fax machine and printers are not intended for graduate student use except for those serving as a course TA.

Lowry Memorial Library (Baker Hall)

The Department maintains a small library in 335 Baker Hall. This library has selected anthropology books, journals, and copies of Anthropology theses/dissertations.

The Consortium for Archaeological Research (McDonel Hall)

The Consortium (CAR) includes archaeologists from the Departments of Anthropology, History, and Art History. The Consortium has office space, laboratory space, a computer lab, storage facilities, and a lounge in the east wing of McDonel Hall. [Campus Archaeology Program \(CAP\)](#) is part of CAR, and often hires graduate students for special projects or work.

The MSU Forensic Anthropology Laboratory (1st Floor Giltner Hall)

The Forensic Anthropology Laboratory is located in Giltner Hall. The equipment in this laboratory is available for graduate student use on projects under the supervision of the physical anthropology faculty.

The Biomarker Laboratory for Anthropological Research (4th Floor, Giltner Hall)

Directed by Dr. Fujita, the Biomarker Lab facilitates all stages of research in biological or medical anthropology using biomarker data from living humans.

The MSU Bioarchaeology Laboratory (4th Floor, Giltner Hall)

Established by Dr. Wrobel, the Bioarchaeology Lab includes a large analytical laboratory and a photogrammetry studio. Graduate and undergraduate students learn how to read the lives—and deaths—of individuals and groups from the past.

Computer Laboratories (3rd and 5th floors, Baker Hall)

The Department shares these facilities with the Department of Criminal Justice. The 3rd floor computer lab emphasizes qualitative data analysis and ethnographic research. No food or drink is allowed in these rooms. There are also printing facilities in the computer labs.

The Graduate School Resources

The Graduate School has many helpful resources to help students navigate their graduate careers. Students are encouraged to become aware of programs and resources offered through the [Graduate School](#):

- [Diversity, equity, & inclusion programs](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [Funding](#)
- [Graduate Career Development](#)
- [Graduate Educator Advancement and Teaching \(GREAT\)](#)
- [Graduate School Office of Well-Being \(GROW\)](#)
- [Mentoring](#)
- [Out-of-State tuition waivers](#)
- [Policy information](#)
- [Professional development](#)
- [Research integrity](#)
- [Traveling scholar opportunities](#)

- [University Committee on Graduate Studies](#)

University Resources

Area Studies Centers and Institutes

The Department has formal ties with many other campus units that emphasize international studies. MSU houses many nationally recognized area studies centers and institutes, such as the [Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies \(CLACS\)](#), the [African Studies Center \(ASC\)](#), the [Asian Studies Center](#), the [Muslim Studies Program](#), the [Julian Samora Research Institute \(JSRI\)](#), the [Institute for Public Policy and Social Research \(IPPSR\)](#), the [Center for Bioethics and Social Justice](#), and the [Center for Gender in Global Context \(GenCen\)](#).

Computer Assistance

[MSU IT Services](#) offers short courses on computer use and on the collection and coding of data.

Lab for the Education and Advancement in Digital Research (LEADR)

Anthropology graduate students may consult with [LEADR](#) regarding the use of digital technologies and methods for classes and their individual research projects.

The Main Library

[The Library](#) has many resources available to graduate students including area studies librarians.

MATRIX: Center for Digital Humanities and Social Sciences

The Department partners with [MATRIX](#) to develop new technologies for teaching, research, and outreach.

The MSU Museum

The Department maintains formal ties with the [MSU Museum](#); some faculty members have joint appointments as Curators.

Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS)

[OISS](#) serves MSU international students, scholars, employees, and their families by providing regulatory and immigration expertise along with engagement and educational activities. It is a resource center for information and consultation on matters such as academic problems, immigration questions, employment, and finances. The Center also sponsors training programs.

Student Life & Engagement Division

Resources provided by [MSU's Student Life & Engagement Division](#) include:

- [Student Parent Resource Center](#)
- [Gender and Sexuality Campus Center](#)
- [Student Veterans Resource Center](#)
- [Women's Student Services](#)

Olin Heath Center

[Olin Health Center](#) is the primary Student Health Services location. [Counseling and Psychiatric Services \(CAPS\)](#) and some [Health Promotion](#) services are also located in Olin Health Center.

Remote Sensing & GIS Research and Outreach Services (RS&GIS)

Graduate students and faculty in the Department also have access to facilities at the [Center for Remote Sensing and GIS](#) for specific research projects.

Statistical Assistance

[CSTAT \(Center for Statistical Consulting and Training\)](#) offers personalized help with statistical problems. Graduate student consultants from the Department of Statistics and Probability are available by appointment to consult about design problems, statistical design, etc.

The Writing Center

[The Writing Center](#) offers personal assistance for small projects such as vitas, abstracts, and cover letters. The consultants also organize "peer response writing groups" to help graduate students prepare class papers, research papers, and theses/dissertations.

Additional Resources

- [RCPD](#)
- [Office of Spartan Experiences](#)
- [Institutional Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [The Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation](#)
- [University Outreach & Engagement](#)
- [The Ombudsperson's Office](#)

Graduate Student Organizations

Council of Graduate Students (COGS)

[The Council of Graduate Students](#) represents the graduate student population to the University. It is the official governing body of all MSU graduate students. Each department has a graduate student representative to COGS, who attends meetings and reports back to the students on those issues that are relevant to them. COGS is located in Chittenden Hall.

Graduate Employee Union

Graduate teaching assistants at MSU are covered by the GEU contract. Information regarding [the union and the contract](#) are available online.

Graduate Student Association (GSA)

All graduate students in the Department are members of this organization. The GSA is governed by members elected by other graduate students and sends an elected representative to all faculty committees that include a student representative. The email address for GSA is: msu.anp.gsa@gmail.com.

Links to Select University Policies

Many policies and rules described here derive from University, College, and Graduate School guidelines. University policies override all inconsistent provisions of the departmental Handbooks. For more information and recent updates please consult the following websites:

- [Academic Programs Catalog](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Policy \(ADP\)](#)
- [Code of Teaching Responsibilities](#)
- [Disability and Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#)
- [Digital Accessibility Policy](#)
- [General Student Regulations](#)
- [Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities \(GSRR\)](#)
- [Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities](#)
- [Integrity of Scholarship & Grades](#)
- [Law Student Rights and Responsibilities \(LSRR\)](#)
- [Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities \(MSRR\)](#)
- [MSU Guidelines for Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising](#)
- [MSU-GEU Contract](#)
- [Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct](#)