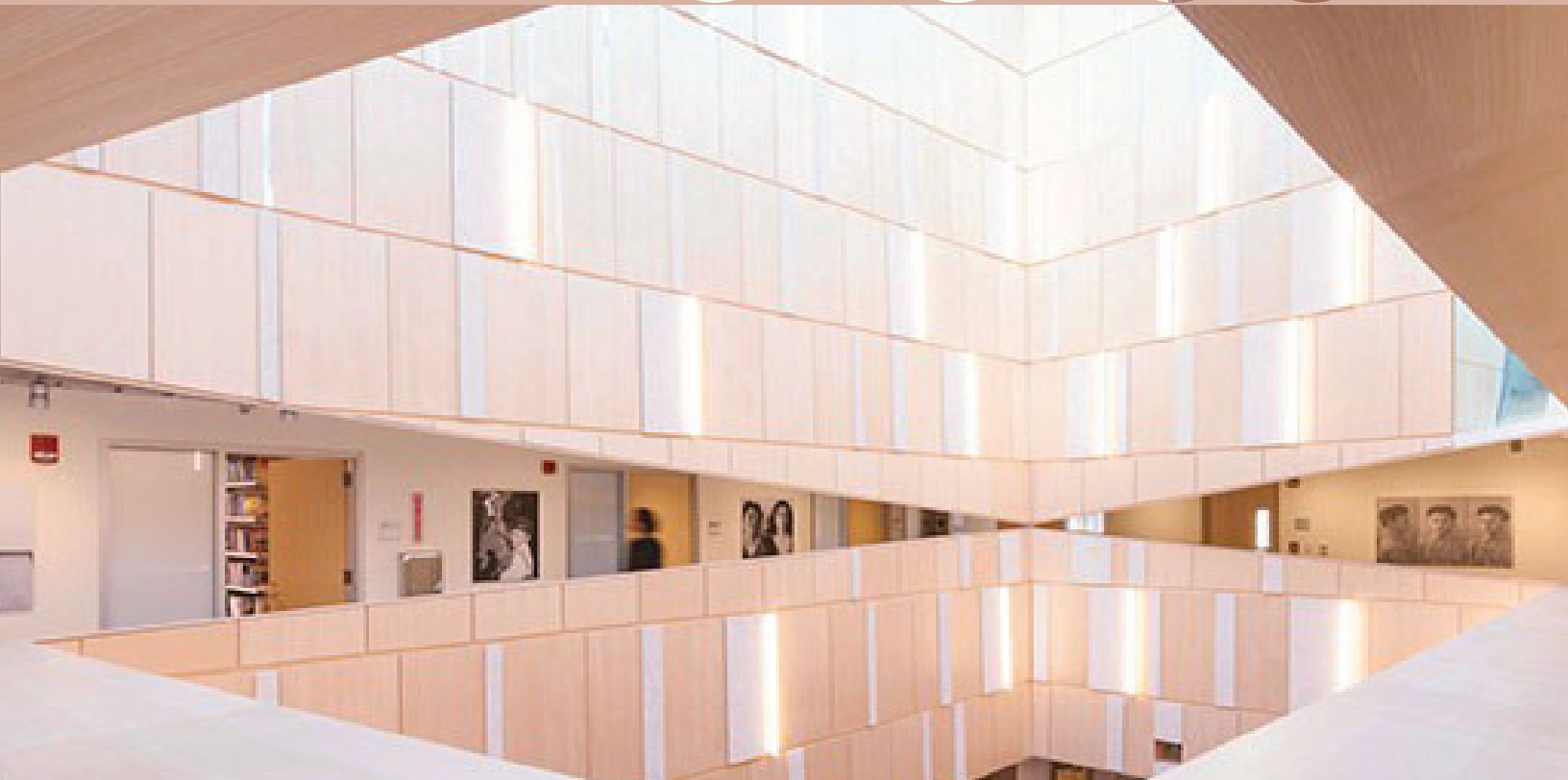


HARVARD ANTHROPOLOGY



CONCENTRATION ADVISING PACKET

2024-2025

Department of Anthropology

DEPARTMENT CONCENTRATIONS

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ARCHAEOLOGY

COMBINED ANTHROPOLOGY

(SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY + ARCHAEOLOGY)

UNDERGRADUATE ADVISING TEAM

The Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) has overall responsibility for the academic progress of undergraduates and, along with the Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies (ADUS), is available by appointment for general academic and administrative advising. The Undergraduate Program Coordinator provides day-to-day advising to current and prospective students and can assist students with declaring a concentration or secondary, information on course offerings, and many other advising matters.

GABRIELLA COLEMAN

Director of Undergraduate Studies

11 Divinity Ave., Peabody Museum, Room 567
egabriella_coleman@fas.harvard.edu

DAMINA KHAIRA

Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies

21 Divinity Ave., Tozzer Building, Room 207
dkhaira@fas.harvard.edu

ALEX CROSETT

Undergraduate Program Coordinator

21 Divinity Ave., Tozzer Building, Room 103b
acrosett@fas.harvard.edu

SECONDARY FIELDS

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ARCHAEOLOGY

PEER CONCENTRATION ADVISORS

Peer Concentration Advisors (PCAs) are Anthropology concentrators available to talk to you about navigating your way through the concentration, from whether to concentrate (or pursue a secondary field) in Anthropology to what courses to take. The Peer Concentration Advisors for 2024-2025 are below.

ÉMILIE BLONDIN '25

emblondin@college.harvard.edu

JOLIN CHAN '25

jchan@college.harvard.edu

ANDREA LANZA '25

andrealanza@college.harvard.edu

EMMA LU '26

emmalu@college.harvard.edu

KADE MCGOVERN '25

kademcgovern@college.harvard.edu

HANNAH SHIN '26

hannahshin@college.harvard.edu

ELI VISIO '26

elijahjohnson@college.harvard.edu

SNEHA YELAMANCHILI '26

snehayelamanchili@college.harvard.edu

What is Anthropology?

“Anthropology is the study of what makes us human”

~ American Anthropological Association

Anthropologists undertake a focused and contextualized approach to understanding the diversity of the human condition and experience. In particular, anthropologists investigate how people make sense of and constitute their world across time and space. Anthropology includes the study of how human behavior has evolved as well as how language, technology, culture, and kinship endure, transform, and continue to shape humanity.

Unlike sociology, which is focused today more on the effect society and modernization/urbanization has on humans in primarily western societies, anthropology casts its net far wider in terms of its cultural and historical reach. By focusing more on qualitative data, anthropological research is immersive, and takes into account biology and other concerns such as reflexivity and relativism. Anthropologists learn how to draw from a wide range of scientific methods, analyses and humanistic inquiries in order to illuminate the nature and complexity of our many differences and similarities.

The Department of Anthropology welcomes students interested in interdisciplinary approaches to the social sciences and humanities, exploring study abroad and language study, and curious about exploring other ways of being in the world.

Most students choose to focus their studies in one of three programs of study: Social Anthropology, Archaeology, or a Combined track that focuses on both approaches. All three options offer flexible plans of study, small tutorials, individual advising, and opportunities to engage with research in the classroom and through independent projects, sometimes leading to a senior honors thesis. We also encourage joint concentrations for those writing theses that connect anthropology to other concentrations on campus.

Anthropology Concentration

The Anthropology Concentration at Harvard involves students in the study of human diversity in the past and present. This study intersects with a wide range of subjects and interests. These can be grouped under the following areas of focus, each of which points to particular strengths within our department of Anthropology.

SOME AREAS OF FOCUS

Social Anthropology	Archaeology
Politics, Law, and Rights Culture, Communication, and Media Medicine, Science, and Technology Space, Materiality, Ecology	Behavior, Subsistence, Economy Environment, Landscape, Migration History, Ethnicity, Language Art, Religion, Ritual

Social Anthropology

Social Anthropology examines the social and cultural diversity of contemporary human experience, practice, and knowledge. Based on various research methods including ethnography, social anthropology provides a critical perspective for better understanding everyday life in a globalized world, and the political, economic, and cultural interconnections within and among the societies of the world.

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY: REQUIREMENTS

Basic Concentration Requirements (10 courses)

- ANTHRO 1610: Ethnographic Research Methods (Fall Term)
- ANTHRO 97z: Sophomore Tutorial in Social Anthropology (Spring Term)
- ANTHRO 98a: Junior Tutorial in Anthropology (Fall Term)
- Four Social Anthropology courses, any level
- One course in Anthropology (Social Anthropology or Archaeology)
- One course in Archaeology
- One related course: One additional course in Anthropology or in any social sciences field or advanced foreign language. Students may substitute a relevant course in humanities or science fields with approval from the DUS or ADUS.

Additional Information:

- Pass/Fail: one course may be taken Pass/Fail and counted toward the concentration. This will ordinarily be in the related course category. All Anthropology tutorials are letter-graded.
- Study and Research Abroad: If a student has received Harvard degree credit for courses taken in a Harvard-approved overseas studies program, the student may petition the DUS and ADUS for permission to count these courses towards Social Anthropology concentration requirements.

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY: HONORS

Thesis Track (12 courses)

- Basic Concentration Requirements
- ANTHRO 99: Thesis Tutorial in Anthropology. A full-year writing workshop, culminating in the submission of a senior thesis and an oral thesis examination.

Non-Thesis Track (10 courses)

All graduating seniors in Social Anthropology who are not thesis candidates may be considered for a non-thesis honors recommendation of Honors, provided that their concentration grade point averages calculated at the end of their next to last terms are among the highest twenty-five percent of non-thesis candidates in their graduating class in Social Anthropology. To be considered for a High or Highest Honors recommendation in Anthropology, a student must complete a thesis, in addition to the requirements specified above.

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY: AREAS OF FOCUS AND RECENT THESES

Politics, Law, and Rights

The study of politics and law has been central to the discipline and covers a range of topical concerns: from the transformation of the nation-state through new social movements and forms of political mobilization and action, to changes in the nature of civil and political society, the global explosion of constitutionalism and cultures of human rights, and the politicization of the law.

- Sameer Khan '24: Anatomies of Azaadi: Embodied Occupation and Fleshly Futurity in the Eroded Everyday of the Kashmir Valley
- Vivekae Kim '21: 'Future Revolutionaries': A Campaign to Reform Immigration Court in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands
- Sophia Vargas '20: In the Wake of War: An Ethnography of Women Ex-Combatants in Colombia
- Amanda Flores '18: The Land and the Law in the Lljata: Challenges in Housing Rights Advocacy in Bolivia

Culture, Communication, and Media

In a world ever more globally connected and ever more saturated with media images and communication, anthropologists are centrally engaged with the social, political, and material life of texts, images, and new technologies through the study of language, food, art, popular culture, film, television, dance, digital media, and more.

- Devon Gates '24: Explorations in Trust: Gender, Collective Transformation and Sonic Worldbuilding in Non-Male Contemporary Jazz Culture
- Albert Yao '24: Virtual YouTubers: Performance and Embodiment of the Self through Avatars and Live-Streaming
- Meherina Khan '21: "Memes, my FBI Agent & Me": An Autoethnographic Inquiry and Analysis of Surveillance Memes by Self-Aware Muslim Teens
- Scott Roberts '20: La Sinfonia Africana: The Musical Record of the Bata Drum

Medicine, Science, and Technology

Anthropology at Harvard has long had a distinguished reputation in medical anthropology, with noted strength in theorizing the relations among knowledge, power, and therapeutic practice; the comparative study of infectious disease, psychiatry, fertility, and policy; and global concern with rights, ethics, and social suffering.

- Ashton Body '24: "Diabetes Shouldn't be a Death Sentence": an Anthropology of the Patenting (and Enclosure) of Insulin
- David Chen '24: "Facing Death" at Friendship and Love Hospital
- Brian Zhou '24: Cultivating Care, Challenging Capital: an Ethnography of Peer Counseling at Harvard
- Smit Chitre '21: Wounded Healers; Burnout in Detroit Doctors Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Space, Materiality, Ecology

There is significant anthropological interest in studies of ecology, demography, and migration, especially in regard to the impact of environmental change and the intensified global flows of people, ideas, commodities, and pathogens. These phenomena draw on the changing of experience and production of space in natural resource economics, cities, labor flows, and diasporic relations.

- Rosa Amelia Flores-Rueda '24: Living in Entanglements: in Search of a River in the Lower Rio Grande Valley
- Aarushi Shah '21: "We Run This City": The Intertwining of Disposability Precarity, and Essentiality Amongst Chicago Transit Drivers Amidst the Coronavirus Pandemic
- Amalia Frohna '20: L'Union Fait La Force: An Ethnography of Youth Identity in Boston's Haitian Diaspora
- Kumeri Bandara '18: Heritage Husbandry: An Italian Farmer's Reclamation of Agency through "Situated Heritage"

Archaeology

Archaeology investigates the past human condition primarily through the identification, recovery, and analysis of the material remains of ancient peoples in the field and in the laboratory. Goals of archaeology include understanding such developments as the origins of modern humans, the beginnings and spread of agriculture, and the rise and elaboration of complex societies as well as the roles that archaeologically documented pasts play in the modern world.

ARCHAEOLOGY: REQUIREMENTS

Basic Concentration Requirements (10 courses)

- Archaeological Method and Theory. Ordinarily met with GENED 1105.
- ANTHRO 97x: Sophomore Tutorial in Archaeology (Spring Term)
- ANTHRO 98a: Junior Tutorial in Anthropology (Fall Term)
- Five additional Archaeology courses, any level
- One Social Anthropology course
- One course related to Human Evolution. This course must be approved by the DUS or ADUS.

Additional Information:

- Pass/Fail: Two courses may be taken Pass/Fail and counted toward the concentration. All Anthropology tutorials are letter-graded.
- Statistics/Archaeological Science: Concentrators in Archaeology are encouraged to take courses in statistics, archaeological science and/or computer science (including GIS). Competence in handling quantitative data is extremely important in anthropological research, and such competence is best obtained through formal training in statistics and scientific methods.
- Study and Research Abroad: If a student has received Harvard degree credit for courses taken in a Harvard-approved overseas studies program, the student may petition the DUS and ADUS for permission to count these courses towards Archaeology concentration requirements.
- Field Experience: Archaeology concentrators are required to participate in a field experience. While this is not a course requirement, it may be completed by having an experience, training, or internship, including museum internships, for which there is not credit given.

ARCHAEOLOGY: HONORS

Thesis Track (12 courses)

- Basic Concentration Requirements
 - Including one Archaeology Graduate-Level Research Seminar (2000-level)
- ANTHRO 99: Thesis Tutorial in Anthropology. A full-year writing workshop, culminating in the submission of a senior thesis and an oral thesis examination.

Non-Thesis Track (10 courses)

All graduating seniors in Archaeology who are not thesis candidates and have taken a 2000-level course may be considered for a non-thesis honors recommendation of Honors (but not High or Highest Honors), provided that their concentration grade point averages calculated at the end of their next to last terms are among the highest twenty-five percent of non-thesis candidates in their graduating class in Archaeology. To be considered for a High or Highest Honors recommendation in Anthropology, a student must complete a thesis, in addition to the requirements specified above.

ARCHAEOLOGY: AREAS OF FOCUS AND RECENT THESES

Behavior, Subsistence, Economy

Through an interdisciplinary approach that draws on allied disciplines in the biological and physical sciences, archaeologists study biological development and behavioural patterns, the emergence of sedentary groups, the rise of agriculture and pastoralism, technological developments, and changing patterns of production, exchange, and distribution in relationship to environment and ecology.

- Sarah Faber '24: Garum: A Commodity Study
- Marta Stevanovic '14: The Reciprocal Relationship between Microbially-Rich Soil Environments and Bone and Plant Remains

Environment, Landscape, Migration

Archaeology studies the dispersal and organization of human populations in space and through time. This specialization studies the material remains of the past to understand how humans modified landscapes, how did this have an impact on sustainability, and what relationship spatial patterns and environmental changes had on social and cultural developments.

- Mathilde Ribordy '20: The Use of Aquatic Resource in Human Evolution: GaJj17, a Late Pleistocene Locality at Koobi Fora, Kenya
- Brittany Ellis '19: Excavating Ethics: Community-Based Archaeological Research in Theory and Practice
- Sarah Martini '16: The Space Between: An investigation of the changing occupied landscape and urbanism at the El Brujo Archaeological Complex, Chicama Valley, Peru

History, Ethnicity, Language

The development of complex societies through the use of historical texts and material remains is a key focus for archaeological studies of the development of complex systems of record keeping and writing, administrative systems, bureaucracies in ancient states, and the spread of literacy and language in prehistory.

- Nam Hyun Kim '21: "Things that Merit Remembering": Fray Geronimo de Zarate Salmeron's Relaciones and the Archaeology of the Mission Church at Giusewa, New Mexico
- Jessica Gebhard '20: Museums as Translators and Translations: A Corpus Linguistics Study of Tribal and Non-Tribal Museums in the United States
- Morgan Lawton '20: Yo Soy Moche: The Role of Archaeological Sites in Local Identity Formation on Peru's North Coast
- Samantha Noh '15: Protection and Destruction of Cultural Heritage

Art, Religion, Ritual

Archaeology addresses what it means to be human through the decipherment of art, myth, and symbolism. What role did ritual play in our paths from small-group societies and nations? How can material traces in art, architecture, and artifacts be used to understand past and contemporary religious systems?

- Elijah Shell '24: The Nature of Religious Expression at Tiwanaku and Beyond
- Jamie Paterno Ostmann '21: Scenes of Smoke and Scarlet: Cochineal and Tobacco in the Early Modern English Theater
- Rhea Bennett '20: Women of Status and What they Wore: Gender and Status Implications of Personal Ornamentation during the Moche Cultural Phase
- Norman Storer '19: L'ago e l'uso e l'arcolio: A Literary Archaeology of Gendered Objects in the 'Decameron'

Combined

Archaeology and Social Anthropology

COMBINED: REQUIREMENTS

Basic Concentration Requirements (10 courses)

- Archaeological Method and Theory. Ordinarily met with GENED 1105.
- ANTHRO 1610: Ethnographic Research Methods (Fall Term)
- ANTHRO 97x: Sophomore Tutorial in Archaeology (Spring Term)
- ANTHRO 97z: Sophomore Tutorial in Social Anthropology (Spring Term)
- ANTHRO 98a: Junior Tutorial in Anthropology (Fall Term)
- One course in Archaeology
- One course in Social Anthropology
- Two courses in Archaeology or Social Anthropology. One Graduate Research Seminar (2000-level) encouraged, but not required.
- One related course: one additional course in Anthropology or a related discipline, Human Evolutionary Biology, or human evolution. This course must be approved by the DUS or ADUS.

Additional Information:

- Pass/Fail: Two courses may be taken Pass/Fail and counted toward the concentration. All Anthropology tutorials are letter-graded
- Statistics/Archaeological Science: Concentrators in combined Archaeology and Social Anthropology are encouraged to take courses in statistics, archaeological science and/or computer science (including GIS). Competence in handling quantitative data is extremely important in anthropological research, and such competence is best obtained through formal training in statistics and scientific methods.
- Study and Research Abroad: If a student has received Harvard degree credit for courses taken in a Harvard-approved overseas studies program, the student may petition the DUS and ADUS for permission to count these courses towards Archaeology concentration requirements.

COMBINED: HONORS

Thesis Track (12 courses)

- Basic Concentration Requirements
- ANTHRO 99: Thesis Tutorial in Anthropology. A full-year writing workshop, culminating in the submission of a senior thesis and an oral thesis examination.

Non-Thesis Track (10 courses)

All graduating seniors in Combined Archaeology and Social Anthropology, who are not thesis candidates may be considered for a non-thesis honors recommendation of Honors (but not High or Highest Honors), provided that their concentration grade point averages calculated at the end of their next to last terms are among the highest twenty-five percent of non-thesis candidates in their graduating class in Combined Archaeology and Social Anthropology. To be considered for a High or Highest Honors recommendation in Anthropology, a student must complete a thesis, in addition to the requirements specified above.

Secondary Fields

The Department of Anthropology offers two Secondary Field options to provide students who are not concentrators a flexible pathway to exploring their interests in the discipline. Students might wish to explore the wide range of departmental offerings in order to gain a general sense of the field, or focus on a particular topic or region of the world, such as Asia, Latin America, or Africa and the African diaspora.

ARCHAEOLOGY SECONDARY FIELD: REQUIREMENTS

- One introductory course selected from:
 - GENED 1105
 - ANTHRO 1130: Archaeology of Harvard Yard
 - CLASARCH 100: Introduction to Classical Archaeology
 - Introductory course in the archaeology of Ancient Greece or Rome, or Medieval Archaeology, as available.
- Four additional courses in Archaeology and approved by the Secondary Field Advisor.

Additional Information:

- A student may count one additional introductory course from the above list for the secondary field.
- Up to three approved courses in Gen Ed may be counted toward fulfillment of the requirements for the secondary field.
- In addition, one approved course in the student's concentration and a maximum of two ancient language courses may be counted toward secondary field credit.
- All course work must be taken for a letter grade and must be passed with a grade of B- or better.
- Students who complete a Harvard-sponsored or a pre-approved off-campus archaeological field school may count one course credit from that field school experience toward completion of the secondary field.

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY SECONDARY FIELD: REQUIREMENTS

- Four courses in Social Anthropology

Additional Information:

- Courses can be drawn from any departmental or formally cross-listed courses offered by regular Social Anthropology faculty. There is no fixed sequence in which these courses must be taken, but students are strongly encouraged to enroll in Anthropology 1610 or another introductory course that provides a broad overview of the discipline of Social Anthropology.
- One of these may be a Freshman Seminar.
- Graduate courses offered by Social Anthropology faculty may, with instructor's permission, be taken for secondary field credit.
- One course in Archaeology taught by a member of the Department faculty can be counted for credit toward the Social Anthropology secondary field.
- All four courses must be taken for a letter grade, with the exception of the Freshman Seminar, which must receive a grade of SAT. Letter-graded courses must receive a grade of C or better to count for the secondary field.
- Only one course may double count for a secondary field and concentration. Courses count first for concentration, and then one may be double-counted for a secondary field. There is no limit to the number of courses that can double-count for the secondary field and General Education or any other requirement outside of concentration requirements.
- Under ordinary circumstances, courses taken abroad or in the Harvard Summer School will not be counted towards a secondary field unless they are taught by a regular member of the Social Anthropology Faculty.

Joint Concentrations

Both the Archaeology and Social Anthropology programs encourage a joint concentration with any other department that permits a joint concentration. Students interested in undertaking a senior thesis that integrates two disciplines may apply for a joint concentration. These have included:

African and African-American Studies
Arts, Film and Visual Studies
Classics
Comparative Literature
Computer Science
Chemistry
Earth and Planetary Sciences
East Asian Languages and Cultures
Government
History

History and Literature
History of Art and Architecture
History of Science
Human Evolutionary Biology
Music
Neuroscience
Religion
Romance Languages and Literature
Theatre, Dance, and Media
Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY JOINT: REQUIREMENTS

- ANTHRO 1610: Ethnographic Research Methods
- ANTHRO 97za: Sophomore Tutorial in Social Anthropology
- ANTHRO 98a: Junior Tutorial in Anthropology
- Two Social Anthropology courses, any level.
- One additional course in Anthropology.

If Social Anthropology is the primary field, three additional courses are required:

- One Social Anthropology course, any level
- One additional course in Anthropology
- ANTHRO 99: Senior Tutorial (full-year)

ARCHAEOLOGY JOINT: REQUIREMENTS

- Archaeological Method and Theory. Ordinarily met with GENED 1105.
- ANTHRO 97x: Sophomore Tutorial in Archaeology
- ANTHRO 98a: Junior Tutorial in Anthropology
- Three additional Archaeology courses, any level
- One additional Archaeology course: ordinarily Research Seminar (2000-level).

If Archaeology is the primary field, two additional courses are required:

- ANTHRO 98a: Junior Tutorial in Anthropology
- ANTHRO 99a: Senior Tutorial in Anthropology (full-year)

RECENT JOINT CONCENTRATION SENIOR THESES

2024

- Stephanie Sage Brecq: Bittersweet Company (AFVS)
- Sarah Faber: Garum: A Commodity Study (Folklore and Mythology)
- West Foster: Ilé and Egbe: Understanding Community Building and Decoloniality among Black American Ìsèsè and Lukumí Practitioners (AAAS)
- Sameer Khan: Anatomies of Azaadi: Embodied Occupation and Fleshly Futurity in the Eroded Everyday of the Kashmir Valley (History of Science)
- Elijah Shell: The Nature of Religious Expression at Tiwanaku and Beyond (Religion)
- Cindy Tian: VR-chaecology: Assessing the Potential of Virtual Reality in Demonstrating Archaeological Processes for Enhanced Learning in Museum Exhibits (Religion)
- Albert Yao: Virtual YouTubers: Performance and Embodiment of the Self through Avatars and Live-Streaming (EALC)

2023

- Katherine Enright: From Natural History to National Heritage: The History and Politics of Displaying Colonial Natural History in Singapore Museums (History)
- Rosa Amelia Flores-Rueda: Living in Entanglements: in Search of a River in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (Government)
- Michael Frim: Medieval Irish Perception of Ogham Stones: Spatial and Literary Approaches (Physics)
- Adrian Hackney: Rhinestones and Resistance: The Politics of Fashion in Ballroom Culture (Government)
- Nour Khachemoune: The Case of the Missing Meleagris: Diet and Animal Management at Copán, Honduras (Chemistry)
- Jeromel Dela Rosa Lara: “Smugglers of Faith” Filipina Migrant Domestic Workers in the Middle East and the Making of a Filipino Church of Care (Religion)
- Sebastian Miller: Zooming in on ZooMS: New Approaches to ZooMS Protocols and Further Insights into Animal Identifications in Neolithic and Bronze Age Indus Valley Sites (Chemistry and Physical Biology)
- Waseem Nabulsi: Magic Mountain: Samaritan Astrological Intervention in Palestinian Misfortune (History)
- Marilyn Rodriguez: Care and Community: Exploring the Evolution of Boston’s Community Health Movement (HistSci)
- Andrés Triana Solórzano: Curiepe’s Conucos: Decolonizing Food Sovereignty Through Cultural and Ecological Performance (ESPP)
- Cade Williams: Nothing Beside Remains: A Case Study of Confederate Monument Removal in New Orleans (Folklore & Mythology)

2022

- Kelli Aquino: Dinner of Deception: The Role of Revisionist History in the First Thanksgiving Narrative (History)
- Noah Gold: National Socialism in Stone: How an Obscure Nazi Theater Movement Left Its Mark on the German Landscape (TDM)
- Kiara Gomez: The Cost of Glamor: Unpacking Legal and Labor (In)Visibilities for Fashion Models (Government)
- Nikita Lledo: Who We Are Together: Race Relations in a Post-Apartheid South Africa (HEB)
- Idabelle Paterson: Ex Uno Plures: A Regional Examination of Site Patterning in the Southwestern Amazon (HEB)
- Paul Tamburro: Orality and the Maya “Scribe”: Reading Reading Back into the Picture (HAA)
- Lila Williams: When Two Kingdoms Collide: Conflict and Symbiosis between Amish Communities and Biomedical Doctors in Central Pennsylvania (HEB)

Frequently Asked Questions

Should I study social anthropology or archaeology or both? What's the difference between the two?

It depends on your interests! Social Anthropology primarily studies living societies by the method of participant observation. The objective is to understand how contemporary societies operate, how people construct their identities and contribute to and shape societies in particular ways, and the relationship among the different institutions, values and practices by which societies cohere, construct meaning, compete for access to power and resources, etc.

Archaeology, on the other hand, studies past societies. The method of study is to gain access to the material remains of those societies, primarily through the excavation of ancient (or even relatively recent, colonial-era) sites. Archaeologists employ a range of techniques and modes of study of the material record to try to understand aspects of past societies (i.e., similar to those social anthropologists are study in contemporary societies) on the basis of the material record they left behind.

A student with an interest in material culture should study both: social anthropology provides a skillset in ethnographic research and theory, but archaeology provides an unparalleled training in the study of material culture.

By combining the two, researchers gain training in both disciplines and can produce projects that inform how we understand both humans and their objects, landscapes, and history in different ways.

What is the difference between Anthropology and Sociology?

Anthropology and sociology are very similar in that they investigate humans and human social behavior. However, their broader focus is somewhat different. Very simply, social anthropology is often defined as studying human culture, while sociology is generally defined as the study of society and human institutions. Another way to phrase it is that anthropologists, regardless of the time or area they are studying, are interested in the overall culture of a people, while sociologists are interested in the overall society and the various institutions in that society. While there is overlap between the disciplines, sociology often focuses on the development of institutions and networks, while anthropology focuses on how culture impacts the larger society itself. Sociological methods tend to be quantitative, whereas Anthropology is qualitative and case-study focused.

The two fields share a common origin, in the emergence of the social sciences in nineteenth and early twentieth century developments in the study of societies around the world. From early times, social anthropology focused on the study of non-Western, generally non-industrialized societies. Social anthropology was grounded in the research method of 'participant observation' fundamental to the ethnographic method (i.e., anthropologists went out and lived with the people they were studying). On the other hand, from early on, sociology focused on the study of Western, industrialized societies, generally by means of surveys, and other formal means of gathering information and, thereby, gaining a perspective on how societies operated, and on 'normative' behaviors in society. Increasingly over the mid-to late 20th century, the two fields have come closer together, so that many social anthropologists now carry out their fieldwork in industrialized Western and non-Western societies, and sociologists increasingly rely on ethnographic, participant observation as a preferred method for gathering information.

What kinds of research opportunities are available?

We offer a variety of research opportunities through coursework and independent studies, study abroad, internships, and field school programs. We are always happy to help students to be creative about fieldwork, they don't have to travel abroad to have a really rich fieldwork opportunity.

What are the opportunities for field work?

The department has been home to archaeological field schools in Central and South America in the past and will be again in the near future. At present, our students can take the Archaeology of Harvard Yard I and II courses to gain field work experience and work with their faculty advisors to find field schools in the U.S. and abroad. They go for 4-5 weeks in the summer to learn how to conduct archaeological excavations. In addition, the department often sponsors shorter-term field trips to sites such as the U.S. southwest, China, etc.

Will I be able to travel?

Indeed, there are many opportunities for travel, either on ethnographic or archaeological field schools, or specialized travel connected with students' research projects (e.g., for senior thesis research). Many of our students travel in the summer, over winter break, or over an entire semester or school year. We also provide support for students who don't want to travel.

Will I be able to get a job?

Yes! Harvard Anthropology concentrators are actively recruited by companies in a wide range of industries purely for their critical thinking and writing skills. Our students go into finance, medicine, law, and the media. Museums, public institutions, research companies, and non-profit organizations all benefit from people with anthropological training.

There are innumerable industries open to social anthropologists, including academia, governments, corporations, NGOs, etc. – wherever an understanding of how societies are organized and operate in a globalized world is at a premium. Archaeologists similarly have many job opportunities, such as in academia, museums, governments (e.g., cultural resource management) and other institutions where knowledge and understanding of past societies is valued. Graduates in both fields have been particularly successful in academia; many Anthropology departments at our peer universities include professors with undergraduate degrees from Harvard Anthropology.

What types of jobs are out there for recent graduates?

It very much depends on your research, coursework, and individual interests. Many anthropologists go into non-profit advocacy work as consultants, developers, and organizational specialists. Many work internationally and nationally as interpreters and translators (this is becoming increasingly relevant in the US). Some of the newer jobs readily available to anthropologists are in social media management, public health, and media planning. More “traditional” jobs include various positions in museums, libraries, and universities.

Can I attend any future anthro events?

Absolutely! We will be hosting several events for students throughout the year including info sessions, office hours, workshops, colloquiums, and social events. We will be posting our events on our department website and on the Harvard College Calendar website. We also send out invitations via email, so if you haven't filled out our student interest survey yet, please send us an email at anthrouc@fas.harvard.edu to be added to our mailing list.

Who should I reach out to if I have further questions?

You can reach out to any member of the undergraduate team or PCAs with any questions you have. For general questions about the program, please contact our program email anthrouc@fas.harvard.edu.

