ANTHROPOLOGY

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FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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† A joint appointment with primary affiliation in another department or school.

The major in Anthropology gives a firm grounding in this comparative discipline concerned with human cultural, social, and biological diversity. Anthropology deals not only with that small proportion of humankind in Europe and North America but with societies of the entire world, from the remotest past to the present day. It is thus an essential part of a sound liberal education, helping us to see our world from a perspective that challenges ethnocentric assumptions. The major in Anthropology covers the evolution of human and nonhuman primates and the evolutionary biology of living people; world prehistory and the emergence of civilization; diversity and commonality in social organization and culture; the importance of culture for understanding such topics as sickness and health, gender and sexuality, environment and development, media and visual culture, urban life and sport, economic organization and politics, law and society, migration, and religion; and language use as cultural behavior.

The subfields of anthropological inquiry—archaeology, biological anthropology, sociocultural anthropology, and linguistic anthropology—together offer a holistic perspective on humankind and its development.

Requirements of the major Students are required to present twelve course credits toward their major. At least eight term courses must be taught in the Yale Department of Anthropology. These eight must include an introductory or intermediate course (numbered ANTH 001–299) in each of at least three subfields of anthropology, three advanced courses (numbered ANTH 300–470 or 473–490, not including a senior essay seminar), and two electives. Additionally, all students must prepare a senior essay in ANTH 491 or another Anthropology seminar. Majors may take up to three cognate courses in departments other than Anthropology. Study abroad courses that are approved for Yale College and Anthropology credit may be used to replace one elective. If more than one such study abroad course credit is to be used for the major, it will come at the expense of one or more of the three cognate courses which may be taken in any Yale department or program with the approval of the director of undergraduate studies in Anthropology.

The major does not have formal tracks, but majors may choose to concentrate in one of the subfields of anthropology. They may also draw on courses in sociocultural and biological anthropology to pursue a concentration in medical anthropology. Those who concentrate in sociocultural anthropology are strongly encouraged to take a course in ethnographic methods and one in anthropological theory (e.g., ANTH 303 or 311). Those who concentrate in biological anthropology are strongly encouraged to take courses that give them hands-on experience working with material used in the study of human and nonhuman primate anatomy and evolution and that introduce them to laboratory methods.

Three term courses related to anthropology may be selected from other departments, with approval by the director of undergraduate studies. Majors are not required to present such cognate courses, but those who do should choose courses that expand their knowledge in one of the subfields of anthropology or in an area of cross-disciplinary concentration. For example, cognate courses for biological anthropology can be found in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/ecology-evolutionary-biology), Geology and Geophysics (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/geology-geophysics), Psychology (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/psychology), and Forestry & Environmental Studies (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/forestry-environmental-studies); cognates for sociocultural anthropology can be found in Sociology (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/sociology), American Studies (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/american-studies), History (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/history), Environmental Studies (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/environmental-studies), Religious Studies (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/religious-studies), Global Affairs (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/global-affairs), and international and area studies. Appropriate areas of cross-disciplinary concentrations include such topics as area studies (e.g., Africa); anthropological approaches to law, environment, business, the built environment, and health; gender and sexuality studies; evolutionary biology; and geology.

With permission of the director of undergraduate studies, students may apply up to four courses taken outside Yale as electives or cognates toward the Anthropology major. Such courses must have been approved for Yale College credit and may include courses taken
on a Year or Term Abroad (http://catalog.yale.edu/archive/2016-2017/ycps/academic-regulations/special-arrangements) or through summer study at another college or university.

Credit/D/Fail A maximum of one course taken Credit/D/Fail may be applied toward the Anthropology major.

Graduate courses Most graduate seminars in anthropology are open to qualified undergraduates. Descriptions are available in the departmental office, 10 Sachem St. Permission of the instructor and of the director of graduate studies is required.

Senior essay All majors are required to complete a substantial paper during the senior year, either in a seminar or in ANTH 491. There are three options for completing the senior essay. First, students can write a paper for an advanced seminar. A seminar senior essay must be more substantial than a typical term paper and is expected to be 20–25 pages long. It is evaluated by the seminar instructor and a second reader drawn from the Yale faculty. Students must obtain written approval for this option from the seminar instructor no later than the third week of the term. Students fulfilling the requirements of two majors may not apply a single seminar essay toward the senior requirement for both majors. The deadline for a seminar senior essay is the senior essay deadline, not the term paper deadline. Students choosing this option must take the seminar for which they write their essay in addition to the three advanced courses required for the major.

The second option for the senior essay is an independent essay on a subject of the student’s choice, completed in ANTH 491. A student pursuing this option must choose a topic and identify a faculty adviser by the end of the third week of the term in which the essay is to be written. By the same date, the adviser must approve a prospectus that outlines the topic, objectives, and methods of the essay, as well as a preliminary bibliography. The student should also inform the director of undergraduate studies of a preferred second reader by this time. The adviser must have a faculty appointment in Anthropology, and the second reader must have a faculty appointment at Yale.

The third option for the senior essay is a yearlong paper, begun in ANTH 471 or ANTH 472 and completed in ANTH 491. The yearlong essay is designed for students who wish to pursue more extensive independent projects than can be completed in a single term. Students must have their project approved by a faculty adviser who establishes the requirements for ANTH 471 or ANTH 472; approval is required before the student registers for ANTH 471 or ANTH 472, typically in the fall term of the senior year.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Prequisites None

Number of courses 12 course credits (incl senior req)

Distribution of courses At least 1 intro survey or intermediate course in each of 3 subfields; 3 advanced courses (not incl senior essay sem); 2 electives; up to 3 cognate courses in other depts or programs with DUS approval

Substitution permitted 1 study abroad course for 1 ANTH elective

Senior requirement Senior essay in advanced sem or ANTH 491