

CAREERS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

What is Anthropology?

The field of **Anthropology** prepares students to deal with the challenges of an increasingly international economy, transnationally linked communities, and multicultural citizenries. Besides helping students hone and refine analytical skills and critical thinking, anthropology helps them recognize the impact of cultural dynamics on interpersonal communication and on the social structures that affect everyone's daily lives.

Cultural Anthropology focuses on the practices, ideas, and institutions that make up culture, as well as the visual, material and acoustic forms that communicate meanings and values; it relies centrally on the ethnographic and historical study of communities, in local and transnational contexts. Many cultural anthropologists seek to apply the knowledge gained through research to policy formation and activism within political, environmental, socio-economic, medical, educational and aesthetic realms. **Biological Anthropology** is a biosocial science that examines the anatomy, physiology, and behavior of human and non-human primates as biological organisms. Biosocial studies can be carried out on the skeletal remains of people from the past or on the biological characteristics of living people or primates. Biological anthropologists are interested in human evolution, from our origins and diversity in the past to consequences for health and psychology in the present. **Archaeology** focuses on similar issues as Cultural and Biological Anthropology, but the focus is on ancient people. Archaeology is thus a material-based discipline, and the focus of analysis is the material remains of past human societies, which includes the skeletal remains of human bodies. Archaeologists evaluate myriad topics, including the origins and development of social complexity and inequality, food production, empires and states, religion, and artistic traditions.

Here are some links about the value of an Anthropology major:

The College Board's Comments on Anthropology Major: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/majors/social-sciences-anthropology-cultural-anthropology>

CNN Money on the Anthropology Degree's Value:
http://money.cnn.com/2000/11/17/career/q_degreeanthropology/

What Can You Do With an Anthropology Degree?

Anthropology outfits students with skills that can serve almost any profession that calls for working with people from a variety of backgrounds and in a number of different settings.

A BA degree in anthropology provides the student with basic skills of critical analysis, writing, and cross-cultural understanding, all of which have many applications in public service or political activism, and in the private sector. An anthropology degree with appropriate courses in education also can prepare one for high school teaching in social or natural sciences. **An emphasis in sociocultural anthropology** could prepare one for work in development, community organizing, policy analysis, and social research. **An emphasis in biological anthropology** could prepare one for a career involving anatomy, biological sciences, human biology, zoology, primatology, medical sciences (e.g., nutrition, physiology, genetics), or physical education/athletics. **An emphasis in archaeology** could prepare one for jobs in museum collections management, federal and state parks and forestry management, cultural resource management (contract archaeology), and historic/heritage preservation. However, most practicing anthropologists hold jobs in colleges or universities, where they teach and conduct research. Such jobs require Ph.D. level graduate training.

There are many and varied professional opportunities for students graduating with a B.A. in Anthropology, some of which may require additional education and training. The B.A. degree in anthropology provides you with basic skills of critical analysis, writing, cross-cultural understanding, statistics, and laboratory science – all

of which have many applications in public service and the private sector. Students in the social sciences have a number of opportunities to do field work through formal field schools and through internships in state and federal agencies, in private businesses and other institutions where they can put into practice what they are learning in their classes. These internships often help students better understand their career interests and it is not unusual for internships to lead to employment opportunities after graduation.

Graduate and professional study options include, besides the field of Anthropology itself, other areas such as: Business, Law, Journalism, Medicine, Social Work, Urban Planning, Museum Studies, Forensic Science, Anatomy, Biological and Medical Sciences, Genetics, Zoology, Primate Studies, Paleontology, and Geology. There are also many fields in which a BA in Anthropology can be a key preparation. These include: teaching at primary or secondary levels, community development and organizing, union organizing, development (such as US AID, Teach for America, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps), policy analysis, personnel and human resources, marketing and sales, intercultural communications professionals in hospitals and other public service agencies.

UC-Berkeley's Career Office conducts post-graduation surveys of majors and has found that Anthropology students are almost as likely to be employed in education or nonprofit activities as in other forms of employment. While 58% of those employed were in the "for profit" sector, 26% were working for non-profits, and 16% reported being employed in education. The average salary reported for these new graduates was \$34,557.

You can find more discussion and resources on the web site of the National Association of Student Anthropologists: <http://www.aaanet.org/resources/students/>

Preparing to Reach Your Career Goals

Consider the following types of opportunities available in the Anthropology Department and elsewhere on and off campus:

- Classes in *methods* -- such as statistics, ethnographic field methods, archaeological field methods and lab courses, discourse analysis, oral history and interviewing (some of the latter can be found in the History department, in the Public History)
- Research Assistantships and Internships with faculty and graduate students (this may offer hands-on training in field methods and data analysis, as well as the opportunity to learn about particular cultural communities and world areas, in addition to providing closer mentorship opportunities).
- Developing skill in another language/culture (opportunities for participation in field projects outside of the United States often require some foreign language experience).
- Internships in local museums, cultural centers, community development organizations, cultural resource management firms
- Education Abroad opportunities (in addition to providing broader cultural experiences, studying abroad can also facilitate language training).
- UCDC opportunities, which often include internship opportunities at a variety of DC-based federal and non-governmental agencies, cultural institutions.
- AAA Summer Internship Program: <http://www.aaanet.org/profdev/internships/AAA-Summer-Internship-Program.cfm>
- Archaeological Fieldwork Scholarships and Opportunities: <http://www.archaeological.org/grants/708>, <http://www.shovelbums.org/>, <http://www.archaeologicalfieldschools.com/>
- UCSB McNair Scholars Program provides opportunities for students who are first-generation college students, under-represented minorities or from low-income families to work more closely with a faculty mentor: <http://mcnair.ucsb.edu/>
- Consider an undergraduate research project, funded through UCSB's URCA program: <http://www.duels.ucsb.edu/urca>