

Department of Anthropology

Graduate Student Handbook

Revised August 2019

This Handbook can be accessed online through [this link](#)

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Degree Programs

Anthropology offers the following graduate degree options:

MA in Anthropology (General)

Appropriate for any student pursuing a Master's in Anthropology. Most commonly selected by students in archaeology, HHB (Human Health and Biology) and some students in medical anthropology and socio-cultural anthropology. Degree requirements include core courses in three of the four subfields, the Professionalization in Anthropology course, and electives. Students will complete 30 credit hours plus a thesis.

The checksheet for this program can be found here: <http://ou-public.courseleaf.com/arts-sciences/>

MA in Anthropology with a Concentration in Socio-Cultural Anthropology

This program provides a specialized Master's curriculum for students in Socio-Cultural Anthropology. Degree requirements include two core courses in sociocultural anthropology, a course in sociocultural methods, an additional core course from one of the other three subfields, the Professionalization in Anthropology course, and electives. Students will complete 30 credit hours plus a thesis.

The checksheet for this program can be found here: <http://ou-public.courseleaf.com/arts-sciences/>

Master's in Applied Linguistic Anthropology (ALAMA)

This is a program for students interested in revitalizing endangered languages of the Americas. Students receive a strong foundation in documentary and descriptive linguistics, with an emphasis on working collaboratively with endangered language communities. The requirements are currently under review.

The checksheet for this program can be found here: <http://ou-public.courseleaf.com/arts-sciences/>

Accelerated BA in Anthropology/MA in Anthropology with a Concentration in Socio-Cultural Anthropology

This is a program for OU Anthropology majors with a 3.5 GPA or higher interested in completing the BA in Anthropology and the MA in Anthropology with a Concentration in Socio-Cultural Anthropology in five years. Students will complete all of the requirements of the MA and count up to 13 hours from the MA towards the hours needed for the BA. Students interested in this track need to apply during their junior year. Students will complete 30 credit hours of graduate study plus a thesis, in addition to the undergraduate requirements for the BA.

The checksheet for this program can be found here: <http://ou-public.courseleaf.com/arts-sciences/>

PhD in Anthropology with a Concentration in Archaeology

Appropriate for students interested in a PhD in archaeology. Requirements include core courses in all four subfields, an advanced archaeological theory class, and Research Design. Students will complete 90 credit hours plus a dissertation, and can count up to 30 hours from an MA program.

The checksheet for this program can be found here:

<http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms/doctoral-degree-requirements>

PhD in Anthropology with a Concentration in HHB (Human Health and Biology)

Appropriate for students interested in a PhD in molecular anthropology, skeletal analysis, medical anthropology, and related fields. Requirements include core courses in all four subfields, Foundations of Biological and Medical Anthropology, and at least two Methods classes. Students will complete 90 credit hours plus a dissertation, and can count up to 30 hours from an MA program.

The checksheet for this program can be found here:

<http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms/doctoral-degree-requirements>

PhD in Anthropology with a Concentration in Sociocultural and Linguistics

This program is under review and is not currently accepting students.

The checksheet for this program can be found here:

<http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms/doctoral-degree-requirements>

Prospective Graduate Students

New applications are filed with the Graduate College through

<http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/admissions/apply>. Submit your application by February 1.

Applying to the MA or PhD Programs

Prospective applicants should apply through the Graduate College application form above.

Applicants will need the following for their application

- A statement of purpose explaining why the applicant wishes to pursue the degree, how this degree will help you reach your professional goals, what your qualifications are for the program, and why the University of Oklahoma is the best place to pursue your studies
- Names of two references, preferably from the applicant's professors. The referees should be people who can speak to the applicant's ability to pursue a graduate degree in Anthropology.
- Scores for the GRE.
- Transcripts from your undergraduate and any graduate institutions you have attended.

Faculty look for an appropriate fit between the applicants' intellectual interests and the research strengths of the Department. To that end, we strongly suggest that applicants contact potential faculty advisors before submitting their completed applications. If you are unsure who those faculty might be, reach out to the Graduate Liaison. Also, if you are a McNair scholar, please let us know promptly, as the deadline for McNair applicants is earlier than the OU graduate deadline.

Direct any questions about the Department or the application process to the Graduate Liaison. The name and contact information can be found on the [Department web page](#).

Applying to the Accelerated 3+2 Program in Sociocultural Anthropology

The Accelerated 3+2 program is designed for current OU Anthropology majors who want to finish in five years with both a BA in Anthropology and an MA in Anthropology with a Concentration in Sociocultural Anthropology. Students must have at least a 3.5 GPA to be considered for the program.

Students who are interested should observe the following steps.

STEP 1 – Talk to your advisor and plan. If you are interested in this program you should talk to the undergraduate advisor as soon as possible. It is important to take the appropriate level of coursework during your first three years to be eligible for the program. You should also talk to one or more faculty in Sociocultural anthropology about your potential interest in the program.

STEP 2 – Meet with the undergraduate advisor in the fall of junior year to get permission to apply. During the fall of your junior year, you will need to have a discussion with the undergraduate advisor about whether you are a candidate for this program. The advisor will confirm you have the minimum 3.5 GPA and that you have the proper coursework to be considered. If approved to apply, your Major Concentration Code will be modified from BA in Anthropology (B025) to Accelerated BA in Anthropology (A025). This can take a few weeks to process, and must be completed before you can apply online.

STEP 3 – Prepare your application materials. The application deadline for the Accelerated MA program is the same as for the other graduate program degrees, February 1. In order to formally apply for the program, you will need these materials at hand.

- A CV/Resume
- A copy of your Undergraduate Transcript
- A Statement of Goals/Statement of Purpose

This should be a 1-2 page statement that addresses (1) the research questions that motivate your interest in graduate study, (2) the skills you have developed that will allow you to succeed in graduate school, and (3) how the University of Oklahoma can contribute to the realization of your goals.

- Names for Letters of Reference

The names of two people who have agreed to write letters of reference. It is recommended that both be professors that can speak to the quality of your work, and ideally one or both of them are Socio-Cultural faculty at OU. You simply need their names and contact information for the next step, and the system will contact them on your behalf for their letters.

- The GRE is not required. But if you have taken it, have a scan of the score report available.

Step 4 – Apply Online: Ask the Graduate Liaison or Undergraduate Advisor on how to do this.

Applying to the PhD Program as an OU Anthropology MA Student

If you are a current MA student planning to defend your thesis and interested in entering the OU Anthropology PhD program, these are the steps you must follow.

STEP 1 – Talk to your committee chair. Find out if they are supportive and if a PhD makes sense for you.

STEP 2 - Submit a Change of Program (COP) Application. This is done through the regular application portal. You will need a CV, a Statement of Purpose, and a list of faculty you are interested in working with. You do not need to ask for letters of recommendation.

Change of Programs will be considered any time of year. But in order to be considered for funding by the Department the following academic year, you must submit the Change of Program application before February 1.

As per Department policy, no final decision on admission from the MA to PhD is made before the completion of the thesis. After a faculty meeting where admissions decisions are made, COP applicants will only hear one of two results. Either your COP application will be denied or the decision will be deferred until after the thesis has been defended.

Admission to the PhD program is not automatic from the MA. The PhD program is not appropriate for all MA students based on their career plans, match between their research and the faculty, abilities, etc. This is why it is important to talk to your chair and committee about whether the PhD program makes sense for you.

Funding

The Department of Anthropology and associated units like the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, Sam Noble Museum, and LMAMR labs offer funding to students in the form of Graduate Assistantships, either for teaching or research. Students do not need to apply these separately. All newly admitted and current students will be considered for funding by the Department and associated units unless they specifically ask not to be considered for funding on the Annual Evaluation. If these are awarded, students will be granted a stipend, tuition waivers, and health benefits for the semester of employment. In exchange, students will be expected to carry out the duties of the job they are assigned. These jobs typically involve teaching an online or in-person class, supporting a class as a graduate teaching assistant, or working as a research assistant. More information about funding limits and duties and expectations of Graduate Assistants can be found later in this document.

Students in the Accelerated BA in Anthropology/MA in Anthropology with a Concentration in Socio-Cultural Anthropology are not eligible for Graduate Assistantships. ("A student in a simultaneous ADP is considered an undergraduate student for the duration of the program. They may hold an undergraduate assistantship but will not become eligible to hold a graduate assistantship or receive graduate-level tuition waivers or health subsidy benefits." [Source](#))

Starting the Graduate Program

Students who are admitted to the program will be assigned a first semester advisor. The first semester advisor is someone in your subfield who can help provide personalized mentoring. Their job is to help you get started in the graduate program, help you select the right classes for your first semester, and help you navigate the program this fall. By the end of the fall semester, you will need to select a committee chair for your thesis or dissertation, and your first semester advisor will help you select one. It may be that your first semester advisor becomes your committee chair, or you may end up selecting someone else.

New students should consult with their first semester advisor about which courses to choose. They should use the checksheets listed above to understand the degree requirements. Students can use one.ou.edu to find courses that are available for the upcoming semester and to register for courses.

What Classes Should First Semester Students Enroll In?

ANTH 5001: All starting graduate students need to enroll in ANTH 5001 Professionalization in Anthropology. This is a one credit hour class that provides an orientation to the program and provides professional and career skills.

Core class(es): Almost all students should also take at least one of the required core courses in their first semester. The two core courses taught in the fall are

Socio-Cultural Core I: ANTH 5223 Foundations of Social Thought

Archaeology Core: ANTH 6713 Archaeological Theory

All students on the SC/Linguistics track should enroll in ANTH 5223 their first semester. All students in an archaeology track should enroll in ANTH 6713. Students on an HHB track should talk to their first semester advisor about which of these they should take.

Other courses: First semester students are then encouraged to enroll in one or two more courses for a total of 7 or 10 credits your first semester (ANTH 5001 plus two or three other courses). Talk to your first-semester advisor about what courses they recommend.

How Many Courses is Appropriate for the First Semester?

Most students in an MA program or starting a PhD program after finishing an MA plan to take two years of coursework. You can be on track to finish in two years if you take 7 or 10 credit hours in your first semester (two or three courses plus ANTH 5001). Talk to your advisor about what is an appropriate number of hours for you based on your program and background.

I have an MA from another institution and am joining the PhD program at OU. Can I be exempt from any required courses based on previous coursework?

Up to 30 hours from your MA program can count towards the 90 hours needed for the degree. The exact number will depend on rules established by the Graduate College and discussion with your committee.

If you have taken a graduate course at another institution that you think is equivalent to a required course at OU, such as a core course in a subfield, send the syllabus and reading list to the Graduate Liaison. They will ask the faculty who are responsible for supporting the course whether they see this as equivalent based on the similarities in content and rigor.

Forming a Committee

Note that these rules are current as of January 2019, but are expected to change with pending Graduate College and Department policy changes. For instance, the Graduate College has reduced the minimum doctoral committee size from 5 to 4. The Graduate College is also expected to make changes to the tiers of graduate faculty status and change the name of the "outside" member. Finally, in Fall 2018 the Department approved changes to graduate faculty status that will impact this document, but these are still pending Graduate College approval.

What does a graduate committee do?

A graduate committee is the group of faculty appointed to review your thesis or dissertation and PhD exams and decide if it passes. They are also the mentors who help with designing the research and guide the writing of the work. All committees have a faculty member designated as the chair, who is usually the student's primary advisor and the one with the most responsibility for guiding the research.

How large is the committee?

Master's committees must have at least 3 faculty; PhD committees have 5 (note the Graduate College is changing the minimum to 4; but the rest of the text still discusses 5 members which is still expected to be common for Anthropology committees). Committees can be larger, but it is strongly discouraged (see below).

How do I choose a committee?

Ultimately it is the student's responsibility to form their committee and it is the student's right to choose their committee members. Committee formation starts with the selection of a committee chair. This is often the person best positioned to sponsor and advise the research the student is conducting. The rest of the committee formation should be done in consultation with the committee chair, although it is ultimately the student's choice about who serves.

There are several rules in the Department and the Graduate College that affect who can serve on the committee and in what capacity.

When do I form my committee?

Most students should form their committee by the end of their first semester in their program. In a few rare cases, committee chairs may delay this slightly while the student and chair work out more details of the research direction. However, to stay on schedule for timely completion of the degree, by the end of the first semester is ideal.

How do I go about forming a committee?

The first step is identifying a committee chair and asking them if they will serve as your chair. Once you have found a chair that will serve, talk to them about the rest of the committee and come up with a plan. It is up to the student to invite the other committee members. Typically, students email faculty to set up a meeting to ask if they will serve. Students should offer to meet with the faculty in-person to discuss their research. The faculty can then decide whether or not to serve.

What is Graduate Faculty status?

All faculty have to be certified by the Department and the Graduate College to serve on a graduate committee. Faculty are assigned one of five statuses described below. The current list of the [status of all OU faculty can be found here](#).

This document also lists which department(s) the faculty have their graduate faculty appointments in, which is important for the rules below.

Appointment	Privileges
M0	May teach graduate-level classes
M1	All the privileges of M0 and may serve on and/or chair master's degree committees
M2	All the privileges of M1 and may serve on doctoral committees
M3	All the privileges of M2 and may chair doctoral committees
SM	Special Membership status. May be granted the privilege to teach graduate-level classes, to serve on graduate examination committees, or to serve on thesis or dissertation committees, at the discretion of the academic department and subject to the approval of the graduate dean. <u>May not chair graduate committees or serve as the outside member of dissertation committees, unless their graduate faculty status notes special privileges to do so.</u>

Some other terms are important below because they are referenced by Graduate College or Department policy:

- A "regular faculty in Anthropology" refers to tenure/tenure-track faculty with instructional appointment in the Department. The list of "Core Faculty" [on this page](#) largely lists these

faculty (although the purpose of that list is not to only list “regular” faculty, so that is not a precise list for this purpose.)

- An Affiliate Faculty in Anthropology is someone with an appointment outside of Anthropology, but which the Department has designated as an Affiliate faculty. They are listed as Affiliate Faculty [on this page](#).

What are the rules for composition of a master’s committee?

The chair of the committee must be M1, M2, or M3 with graduate appointment in Anthropology. Also, by Graduate College rules and Department policy, the majority of the committee must have their graduate faculty appointments in the Department of Anthropology and must be regular faculty in the department with an instructional appointment in the Department. An Affiliate Faculty member does NOT count as being from the Department of Anthropology.

Thus, an MA committee will have the following composition.

Position	Description and Rule
Chair	Must be M1, M2, or M3 in the Department of Anthropology
Anthropology Committee Member	Must be M1, M2, or M3 in the Department of Anthropology
Third Committee Member	Can be in the Department of Anthropology, can be Affiliate Faculty, can be in another Department at OU, or be outside of OU but issued graduate faculty status at OU. Must be M1, M2, M3, or SM with privileges of serving on MA committees.

What are the rules for composition of the doctoral committee?

Per [Graduate College rules](#), the doctoral committee must consist of a committee chair, a Graduate College representative, and at least two other members of the graduate faculty. The chair of the committee must be M3 with graduate appointment in the Department of Anthropology.

A doctoral committee also has a Graduate College representative (formerly known as the outside member). This is a person who is not in the Department who can observe the process. Often they make an intellectual contribution to the committee, but this is not always the case. From the University’s point of view, they help make sure the process is observed and followed, and they are there as an outside observer to protect the student, the faculty, and the University. By Department policy, this person cannot be an [Affiliate faculty of Anthropology](#). The Graduate College representative must be M2 or M3 with a Graduate faculty appointment that is not in Anthropology and is also not an Affiliate faculty member of Anthropology.

Also, by Department policy, at least one committee member must be in the Department, but outside of the student’s subfield.

One other important rule of the Graduate College also applies, and is intended to keep the committee balanced: the *majority* (3 out of 5) of the committee members must have a M2 or M3 appointment in Anthropology.

For most doctoral committees, a committee follows this template:

Position	Description and Rule

Chair	Must be M3 in the Department of Anthropology
Anthropology Member	An M2 or M3 faculty member in Anthropology who can make a major intellectual contribution to the dissertation.
Anthropology Outside Subfield Member	Must have a graduate appointment in Anthropology, by M2 or M3, and not be in the student's subfield.
Flexible Position: Anthropology Member, Affiliate Member, or Other	Typically another faculty member in Anthropology who can make a major intellectual contribution to the dissertation, but could also be an Affiliate Faculty, or another faculty (inside or outside OU) that has been approved by the Graduate College to serve on doctoral committees.
Outside Member	Must be M2 or M3 with a Graduate faculty appointment that is not in Anthropology and is also not an Affiliate faculty member of Anthropology

Can I have a Co-Chair?

Yes, in some cases it makes sense to have Co-Chairs. For purposes of the Graduate College however, one of the committee members must be designated "Chair" and the other person is "Co-Chair."

Can I have a committee that is larger than normal?

Maybe. A master's committee is usually 3 and a doctoral committee is usually 5. Students are strongly discouraged from forming larger-than-usual committees. It creates more work for the student and for the faculty. It also means there are more faculty that must approve the student's work in order to pass, more faculty who can request an increase to the scope of the project, and increased odds of conflicting requests.

In addition, in our experience, the most frequent reason a student makes the request for a larger committee is to add an additional affiliate or outside committee member. This usually creates an unbalanced committee (the majority of the committee no longer has a graduate appointment in Anthropology) and so requires the addition of not one, but two additional members, which exacerbates the problems above.

Students should keep in mind that some faculty are happy to advise on topics or methods even if they are not formally on a committee, and so you may be able to gain access to additional expertise in that way.

If after reading this you are still convinced a larger committee is needed in your case, talk this over with your committee chair and the Graduate Liaison.

What paperwork is involved in forming a committee?

Master's Students submit a "Master's Thesis Topic and Committee Membership" form. This is required to be submitted the semester before the student plans to defend along with the "Program of Study" form. Some students with funding may be required to submit these forms earlier. Instructions on completing this form can be found below under the heading "Important Forms Needed For Graduate College."

If MA students change their committee, they just resubmit the "Master's Thesis Topic and Committee Membership" form.

PhD students submit the “Advisory Conference Report” form. This is usually due the semester before students intend to take their doctoral exam, but can sometimes be required earlier. If there is a change to the committee, there is a separate “ACR Request for Change” form. Instructions on completing this form can be found below under the heading "Important Forms Needed For Graduate College."

Can I make changes to my committee?

Yes. It is common for students to make changes in their committee for various reasons. Perhaps the direction of the research has changed and the expertise of a different faculty member is needed or perhaps committee members retire or leave the University. It is again, the student’s right and responsibility to form their committee. Students have a right to not have faculty on their committee that the student does not want.

The main restriction with changing a committee has to do with the timing of the change. There are Graduate College rules which prohibit exams or defenses within 30 calendar days of a change to the committee.

Students are often nervous about telling a faculty member that they are no longer on a committee. In most circumstances faculty are fine with stepping down because it represents one less obligation for them.

What happens if I can’t form a committee?

Under Graduate College rules, a department can set a deadline for a student to form a committee and recommend disenrollment if the student has not formed a committee that meets the Graduate College and department rules by the deadline.

It is the “Students Right and Responsibility” to form a committee. What does that mean?

The student has the right to have whom they want on the committee, given the restrictions of the rules discussed above and the available faculty. Faculty also have the right to serve or not serve on any committee.

It is the student’s responsibility because they need a valid committee to progress, and it is up to the student to make sure the committee gets formed. The Department may set a deadline by which a student must form a full committee.

Annual Evaluations

All graduate students are expected to participate in the Annual Evaluation process. This process occurs every spring. The Graduate Liaison will send the Annual Evaluation form and instructions, and students are expected to return that form by February 1.

As part of the annual evaluation process, all students in residence in Norman are expected to meet with their committees. Those students outside of the Norman area are strongly encouraged to arrange a committee meeting over Skype or something similar. These meetings are a chance for you to share your progress with your committee and get feedback on your research.

At the conclusion of the Annual Evaluation process, all students will receive an official letter assessing them on progress to degree, performance in the classroom, and performance in official duties as a Graduate Assistant. This letter will indicate whether the student is making Satisfactory progress towards the degree, Unsatisfactory progress, or it may be a Letter of Concern. Unsatisfactory letters are shared with the Graduate College, and two Unsatisfactory letters may

result in disenrollment from the program. Under some circumstances the Department may evaluate students at other times of the year.

Thesis and Dissertation Hours

What are Thesis and Dissertation Hours?

ANTH 5980 is the class for Thesis hours for Master's students and ANTH 6980 is the class for Dissertation hours for doctoral students. These are required for your Master's and Doctoral degrees and act like an Independent Study for doing thesis or dissertation work. All Anthropology students need a certain number of these to graduate and there are several rules that apply:

- You must be enrolled in thesis or dissertation hours the semester you defend your thesis or dissertation.
- By the end of your program you must have the required number of thesis or dissertation hours for your degree.
- Once you begin enrolling in Thesis or Dissertation hours, you must enroll in at least 2 hours every Fall or Spring semester until you defend.

How Many Hours Do I Need to Graduate?

MA students need 2-5 Thesis hours and PhD students need 29 dissertation hours. (Students under an old degree programs will need 3 and 30.)

When Should I Start Taking Thesis or Dissertation Hours?

At any level, it is generally not to the student's advantage to take thesis/dissertation hours sooner than you need, since you are obligated to maintain enrolment once you start until you defend.

The majority of MA students should plan to take thesis hours only during the semester they defend, but some students may need to start enrolling before that because of some of the factors listed below. Some MA students make the mistake of starting thesis hours too soon, requiring them to enroll, and frequently pay for, more thesis hours than is minimally required for the degree. Make a plan with your advisor about when to start thesis hours based on a reasonable defense date expectation.

PhD students typically start dissertation hours once they are done with coursework and around when they take their exams. Before they can start dissertation hours, they may be required to file the *General Exam Application for the Doctoral Degree* form with the Graduate College.

How Many Thesis or Dissertation Hours Should I Take This Semester? (What About Eligibility for GA/RA-ship? What About Financial Aid?)

That is a really good question, and will depend a lot on your individual circumstance. I recommend making a plan between now and the semester you plan to graduate of the classes you plan to take and the number of thesis/dissertation hours you plan to take each semester. Keep in mind these requirements:

- Check that your plan ensures that by the time you graduate you will have at least 2-5 thesis hours or 29 dissertation hours.
- Keep in mind that every semester after you start enrolling in thesis/dissertation hours, you must enroll in at least 2 thesis/dissertation hours every Fall and Spring semester.

- Make sure you are sufficiently enrolled based on your funding and financial aid status (see below).

What is Considered Full-Time and Half-Time Enrolment?

If you have a tuition waiver through the University because you are a GA or RA, you are obligated to be enrolled in at least 5 credit hours each semester, unless it is your final semester. In your final semester you are considered full-time for purpose of a tuition waiver with just 2 thesis or dissertation hours.

If you get financial aid, most students will need to take 6 hours which qualifies you as half-time for federal financial aid and qualifies you for aid and loans. It takes 9 hours to be considered full-time for federal financial aid, but according to the Office of Financial Aid, there are few benefits to being full-time instead of half-time, since you qualify for similar aid. Details on the aid available to half-time and full-time students are available from the Financial Aid office.

How Do I Enroll in Thesis or Dissertation Hours?

Likely if you try to enroll through One, you will be told you need Department/College permission. To get that permission, contact the Graduate Liaison. Your email should include:

- Your student ID
- The name of your Committee Chair, who you will be taking the thesis/dissertation hours with.
- The section number associated with your advisor for ANTH 5980 or 6980. This can be found in the course catalogue in Ozone. If your advisor does not have a section number, let me know, and I will initiate the process for creating one.

The Graduate Liaison will then enable you to enroll in thesis/dissertation hours in One.

Important Forms Needed For Graduate College

At some point during your graduate career you will need to fill out and send to the Graduate College a form describing the classes you are using to fulfil the degree requirements and document your committee.

For MA students this is due the semester before you defend. But this is also due before you can be eligible for more than 15 tuition waiver hours.

For PhD students, this is due before you can take the PhD exams or before you qualify for more than 45 tuition waiver credits.

MA Students: How to Fill Out Your Program of Study AND Thesis Topic and Committee Form

[The Program of Study form can be found here](#). Pick the form corresponding to the degree program you are in. The "Master's Thesis Topic and Committee Form" [can be found here](#). Some important tips:

- Please fill these out electronically, and send it to the Graduate Liaison first for comments *before* you print them out.
- Please list courses you plan to take before you are done in order to get you to the required number of credits.

- If you have taken more courses than are required, only list the courses you want to count towards your degree. This is not a complete record of your graduate coursework (that is what your transcript is), but just a document which shows you have met the requirement for the MA degree. In other words, the total hours should be 30, not 33 or 36. In rare cases, students might take an odd 2 or 4 credit hour class (often in another Department), in which case a total of 31 or 32 hours is possible and acceptable.
- If you are listing courses to take in the future, you have to list actual courses, not something like "Elective TBD." It is OK to update the form later to reflect changes in plans and enrolment.
- For the list of faculty, it asks for Department/Status and Expiration Date. These refer to the graduate [faculty status that can be looked up here](#).

Once the Graduate Liaison approves the forms are ready over email, you will need to print them out and get signatures from all of your committee members. If you have a committee member that is out of town or the country for an extended time, let the Graduate Liaison know and they can get an electronic authorization from them. Once you have all of the signatures but that of the Graduate Liaison, get them to the liaison to complete and to submit them to the Graduate College.

PhD Students: How to Fill Out Your ACR (Advisory Conference Report)

[This is the link to the form.](#)

Some important tips:

- Please fill these out electronically, and send it to the Graduate Liaison first for comments *before* you print them out.
- Read the instructions carefully to let you know how the form should be filled out.
- Please list courses you plan to take before you are done in order to get you to the required number of credits.
- If you have taken more courses than are required, only list the courses you want to count towards your degree. This is not a complete record of your graduate coursework (that is what your transcript is), but just a document which shows you have met the requirement for the PhD degree. In other words, the total hours should be 90, not 93 or 96. In rare cases, students might take an odd 2 or 4 credit hour class (often in another Department), in which case a total of 91 or 92 hours is possible and acceptable.
- For the list of faculty, it asks for Department/Status and Expiration Date. These refer to the graduate [faculty status that can be looked up here](#).

Once the Graduate Liaison approves the forms are ready over email, you will need to print them out and get signatures from all of your committee members. If you have a committee member that is out of town or the country for an extended time, let the Graduate Liaison know and they can get an electronic authorization from them. Once you have all of the signatures but that of the Graduate Liaison, get them to the liaison to complete and to submit them to the Graduate College.

Master's Thesis Timeline and Procedures

The Master's thesis is the culmination of your degree. For most students, it is the longest and most complex project they have undertaken to date. [The Graduate College says the thesis](#) "is the product of individual research. It should represent an original contribution to the academic field of knowledge, and it must represent original research by the student."

As part of this process, it is the responsibility of the chair and student to be familiar with relevant policies and deadlines. The Graduate College has a very useful set of checklists for the [MA program](#).

Please double check those to make sure you are completing the things you need to. For instance, students should file their Program of Study AND Thesis Topic and Committee Form with the Graduate College early in the semester before you intend to defend. [The deadlines in any given semester are listed here](#). And the Graduate College Bulletin is the [definitive source of rules on the thesis](#).

MA Thesis Timeline

This timeline assumes an intent to finish in two years, which applies to most, but not all, of our students.

First Year: You will form your committee and work with the committee to pick a research focus and methodology for your thesis. Most students will begin gathering data on or before the summer between their first and second years, but timelines will vary.

Written Research Plan: Before beginning data collection and research, students must circulate a written plan of research to the whole committee. Committee members need to respond in writing that they support the plan. It is up to the committee to dictate the length and detail of the plan but minimally this must include a research question and methodology.

Third Semester: For most students the writing begins in the third semester. No matter what, the student should be in communication with their committee chair and committee about a timeline for completion of the thesis. The Graduate College on formatting the thesis can be found here: <http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms/thesis-dissertation-packet>

Drafts the final semester: The student should circulate all chapter and/or thesis drafts to their committee chair based on the plan they have established. Once the chair has approved the thesis draft, it can be sent to the full committee. **The full thesis must be sent to the whole committee at least 10 working days (typically two weeks) before the intended defense date.**

Scheduling the Defense: Sometime during the final semester, the chair may authorize you to work with your committee members to find a time and date that would potentially work for the defense and pencil in this time and date. Taking this step prior to full committee authorization to proceed to the defense does not necessarily mean that you will be permitted to defend on that date, it merely blocks out a potential time because defenses often occur during a busy time of year. Typically, this scheduling step happens sometime between when the full draft goes to the chair and when the whole committee authorizes the defense. The chair decides on this timing based on the state of the drafts, the time of year, and the likelihood of scheduling conflicts. Once a date is chosen, arrange with office staff to schedule a room for the defense. Most Anthropology defenses are scheduled for two hours, but your committee may make a different request.

Once a draft is circulated to the committee: The committee must review the thesis and decide whether to authorize moving towards the defense. They have until 5 working days (typically one week) before the thesis defense to render decision.

5 Working Days (typically one week) before the defense: If the committee has communicated to the committee chair that they are comfortable moving forward with the defense, the student must file Authority for Defense paperwork with the Graduate College. The Authority for Defense form will require the signature of the committee chair and the Graduate Liaison. **This form is due to the Graduate College five working days (typically one week) before the defense.** *If the Graduate College has not authorized your defense, any defense you hold will not be considered valid.*

Once Authority for Defense is Granted: When the Graduate College grants the Authority for Defense, they will send you and your committee an email. Read all of those instructions carefully. The email will have an attachment called the "Authority Report Form." Print that out. It will also contain a link to a form named "Approval for Thesis/Dissertation Submission to SHAREOK." Fill that out for your committee and print it out to bring it to the defense.

Now you should publicize the defense. By University and Department policy, the defense is public. You should email the whole Department to announce the time and place. You are also welcome to put up fliers. These are big joyous occasions, and it is great to get support for these events!

After a successful defense: The Authority Report Form is due to the Graduate College within 72 hours. Please let one of the office staff scan the signed form for Department records before it is taken over to the Graduate College.

Most successful defenses will require some edits before the final document is submitted. You have until the end of exam week to file the document. Follow the instructions in the Authority for Defense email carefully.

PhD Exam Procedures

The PhD exam, sometimes called the general exam, comprehensive exam or comps, is generally taken [when the student is enrolled in or has completed the final semester of coursework](#). After passing the exam, the student is ready to begin enrolling in dissertation research hours and focusing on their dissertation. At this point the student is considered "ABD" or "all but degree" (something of a misnomer as there is still considerable work to be done before the degree is granted).

Planning with the Committee Chair: Meet with your committee chair to develop a plan of five topics to cover on your exam, and how to integrate your committee members into assisting with those questions. This planning typically starts a semester before the student intends to take the exams.

Working with Committee Members: Make an appointment with each member of your committee or meet with them as a group. At the meetings, be prepared to discuss the areas on which you are prepared to be examined. The student should establish with each committee member a bibliography of works on each topic on which the student will be examined. After the initial and possibly subsequent appointments with each member of your committee, you and the faculty should be in agreement about a range of possible questions on your topic (in the general if not the specific sense). Each member of your committee should approve in writing the bibliography (your original list and any additions suggested by the faculty member) related to the question(s) they will provide. The chair is responsible for making sure questions and bibliographies do not overlap more than is desired.

Scheduling the Examination: You should confer with the chair of your committee to set a date for the written and oral exams. The oral exams should be scheduled at least two weeks after the end of the written exam (though committees may approve a shorter window if circumstances merit, for example due to unavoidable scheduling conflicts). You and your chair are responsible for meeting deadlines and procedures set by the Graduate College and for making sure that you complete the steps above. This includes filing a form called "General Exam Application" no later than the second week of classes in the semester you intend to take the exam. You should also make arrangements with the Department staff to schedule the defense. They will help arrange for examination rooms and clean laptops for use during the exams on which to type the answers.

Written Exam Format: The written exam will be in five parts. Each part will last 4 hours. The exam will be closed book. It is up to the student and committee chair to schedule the exam days. The questions can be done on consecutive days, or spread out, such as examination every other day. The chair and the student can decide on the order of examination topics. The chair of the committee will arrange personally, or with the staff, to provide questions each day and to forward the answers each day to the committee members.

After the Written Examination: The committee is responsible for returning written comments within two weeks of completion of the written exam. [By Graduate College rules](#), after the written portion is complete the committee can decide the written portion is satisfactory and proceed to the oral part as scheduled. Or the committee can decide that the written portion is marginal, but not unsatisfactory, and request an abeyance for the student to complete additional work. Or the committee can decide the exam is unsatisfactory.

Oral Examination: At the conclusion of the oral part of the exam, each committee member will report whether the examination was satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If the committee is not unanimous, the committee should follow the procedure in the Graduate Bulletin and the Graduate Dean will review the case and make a verdict.

Doctoral Dissertation Timeline and Procedures

The dissertation is the culmination of your degree. It is a significant milestone. For most students, it is the longest and most complex project they have undertaken to date. [The Graduate College says the dissertation](#) "is the final and most important component of the series of academic experiences that culminate in the awarding of the doctoral degree. Three major functions are fulfilled by the dissertation experience: (1) it is a work of original research scholarship that makes a contribution to existing knowledge, (2) it demonstrates the student's mastery of research methods of the special field, and (3) it demonstrates the student's ability to address a significant intellectual problem and arrive at a successful conclusion."

As part of this process, it is the responsibility of the chair and student to be familiar with relevant policies and deadlines. The Graduate College has a very useful set of checklists for the [PhD program](#). [The deadlines in any given semester are listed here](#). [And the Graduate College Bulletin is the definitive source of rules on the doctoral exam and dissertation](#).

Dissertation Timeline

Planning Stages: You will form your committee and work with the committee to pick a research focus and methodology for your dissertation. Exact timelines for work vary tremendously between students and between specializations.

Plan of Research/Prospectus: Before beginning data collection and research, students must circulate a written plan of research to the whole committee. Committee members need to respond in writing that they support the plan. It is up to the committee to dictate the length and detail of the plan/prospectus, but minimally this must include a research question and methodology. The committee can request an in-person meeting with the student to discuss the plan/prospectus.

Writing Stage: The student should be in communication with their committee chair and committee about a timeline for completion of the dissertation. The Graduate College requirements on formatting the dissertation can be found here: <http://www.ou.edu/gradcollege/forms/thesis-dissertation-packet>

Final Semester: The student should circulate all chapter and/or thesis drafts to their committee chair. Once the chair has approved the dissertation draft, it can be sent to the full committee. **The full dissertation must be sent to the whole committee a minimum of four weeks before the intended defense date.**

Scheduling the Defense: Sometime during the final semester, the chair may authorize you to work with your committee members to find a time and date that would potentially work for the defense and pencil in this time and date. Taking this step prior to full committee authorization to proceed to the defense does not necessarily mean that you will be permitted to defend on that date, it merely blocks out a potential time because defenses often occur during a busy time of year. Typically, this scheduling step happens sometime between when the full draft goes to the chair and when the whole committee authorizes the defense. The chair decides on this timing based on the state of the drafts, the time of year, and the likelihood of scheduling conflicts. Once a date is chosen, arrange with office staff to schedule a room for the defense. Most Anthropology defenses are scheduled for two hours, but your committee may make a different request.

Once a draft is circulated to the committee: The committee must review the thesis and decide whether to authorize moving towards the defense. They have until 10 working days (typically two weeks) before the dissertation defense date to render decision.

10 Working Days (typically two weeks) before the defense: If the committee has communicated to the committee chair that they are comfortable moving forward with the defense, the student must file Authority for Defense paperwork with the Graduate College. The Authority for Defense form will require the signature of the committee chair and the Graduate Liaison. **This form is due to the Graduate College ten working days (typically two weeks) before the defense.** *If the Graduate College has not authorized your defense, any defense you hold will not be considered valid.*

Once Authority for Defense is Granted: When the Graduate College grants the Authority for Defense, they will send you and your committee an email. Read all of those instructions carefully. The email will have an attachment called the "Authority Report Form." Print that out. It will also contain a link to a form named "Approval for Thesis/Dissertation Submission to SHAREOK." Fill that out for your committee and print it out to bring it to the defense.

Now you should publicize the defense. By University and Department policy, the defense is public. You should email the whole Department to announce the time and place. You are also welcome to put up fliers. These are big joyous occasions, and it is great to get support for these events!

After a successful defense: The Authority Report Form is due to the Graduate College within 72 hours. Please let one of the office staff scan the signed form for Department records before it is taken over to the Graduate College.

Most successful defenses will require some edits before the final document is submitted. You have until the end of exam week to file the document. Follow the instructions in the Authority for Defense email carefully.

Internal Grants and Funding Opportunities

Students in the Department of Anthropology have numerous sources of funding for travel and research. Students are responsible for researching these opportunities and for determining eligibility requirements and deadlines.

Award Source	Award Name	Award For	Degree Program	Details
College of Arts & Sciences	Student Travel Assistance Program	Travel	BA/BS MA/PHD	Link
Graduate Student Senate (GSS)	Conference Grant	Travel	Graduate Degree	Link
	Research Support	Research	Graduate Degree	Link
Grad College	Robberson Travel Awards	Travel	Graduate Degree	Link
	Robberson Research Award	Research	MA/PhD	Link
	Robberson and Wethington Scholarships	Training/Courses	MA/PhD	Link
	Alice Mary Robertson Award	Stimulate interest in Contributions by Women to Oklahoma Culture	MA/PhD	Link
	Eddie Carol Smith Scholarship	Research	MA/PhD	Link
Anthropology	M.E. and L.R. Opler Endowment	Travel	MA/PhD	Link
	M.E. Opler Scholarship	Research	MA/PhD	Link
	Rain Vehik	Travel	MA/PhD	Link
	Gilman and Minnis	Research	MA/PhD	Link

Grades, Funding Limits, and Assistantship Duties

Grades

In graduate school, students should strive for an A in every course. Grades of B indicate students are falling below expectations, and grades of C or lower indicates students are far below expectations.

According to the [Graduate Bulletin](#), you must score a C or higher in a graduate course to get credit. However, the Department requires that in the MA programs, students must get a grade of B or higher in core courses to get credit. See your degree checksheet to see which courses this applies to.

Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA to file for graduation. If a student's grades fall below a 3.0 average after any given semester, they will be contacted by the Graduate College and [placed under academic probation](#) with terms to meet for continuation in the program.

Funding Limits

The Department and the Graduate College both place limits on the amount of funding a student can receive. These limits will never be exceeded if the student finishes the degree program in the time allotted by the Department and does not take more credits than are required for the degree.

The Department limits funding to two years (four semesters) for MA students, four years (eight semesters) for PhD students with an MA, and six years (twelve semesters) for PhD students without an MA. The Graduate College limits students to funding for the number of hours needed for the program. That is, if your degree program requires 30 hours, the Graduate College does not want to extend tuition waivers for the 31st hours, 32nd hour, etc. of the degree, regardless of whether a student has been previously funded. However, the Graduate College rules can be appealed in some circumstances.

Graduate Assistantship Job Duties

As one of the primary purposes of becoming a graduate assistant is to aid the student in the successful completion of a graduate program, graduate assistants may not be appointed for more than one-half (0.5 FTE) employment without special permission of the Graduate Dean. The Department must submit written justification for all appointments greater than 0.5 FTE.

A 0.5 FTE graduate assistantship normally involves 20 hours per week. A teaching assistantship includes time spent in the classroom, preparations, and office hours. In general, it is expected that three office hours per week be scheduled for each course taught. Thus, 0.5 FTE GTAs will generally hold six office hours per week.

Other duties may be assigned in lieu of teaching. Research assistants' nonteaching duties should occupy approximately 20 hours per week for a 0.5 FTE nonteaching assistantship. Note that the Department of Anthropology will not adjust to a schedule of convenience for the student whose outside commitments conflict with University and Department schedules.

The primary responsibility of the GA is to the University of Oklahoma and to the unit such as the Department of Anthropology that hires them. If anything interferes with this primary responsibility, the assistantship can be terminated. Any outside employment is strongly discouraged.

The Department uses evaluation and performance in Assistantship duties to decide on future assignments and funding. If performance issues arise, then a person's assistantship will not be renewed.

Other Graduate Policies and Resources

The Graduate College website has all of the [forms](#) needed to navigate the program. The [Graduate College Bulletin](#) provides the main policies and procedures of the College. And [the Department of Anthropology website](#) may contain additional information.