University of California Santa Barbara
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
ARCHAEOLOGY SPECIALIZATION

M.A./PH.D. DEGREE PROGRAM GUIDELINES
2026-2027

The 2026-2027 Department of Anthropology M.A./Ph.D. Degree Program Guidelines are designed to be used in conjunction with the following for detailed requirements, policies, and procedures specific to the University and the Department of Anthropology:

1. The Graduate Division's Graduate Handbook*
2. The Department of Anthropology's Graduate Program General Guidelines & Handbook 3. The Department of Anthropology's Degree Requirement Sheets

Every attempt has been made to ensure that the information in this handbook is current and correct as of September 2026. It is each student's responsibility to confirm the deadlines, requirements and paperwork that apply to his/her degree/credential program at each step in the graduate school process.

It is important to meet, on a regular basis, with your own faculty advisor. Other key persons to consult as necessary are your Program Assistants, the Faculty Graduate Advisor, Chair, and/ or the Graduate Division.

* Graduate Division's Graduate Handbook is available on-line at http://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/handbook/

M.A./PH.D. PROGRAM IN ANTHROPOLOGY

SPECIALIZATION IN ARCHAEOLOGY
DEGREE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

The M.A./Ph.D. program in archaeology at the University of California at Santa Barbara is designed to provide each student with: (1) a comprehensive knowledge of general anthropology, including ethnology, archaeology, and physical anthropology; (2) a solid grounding in archaeological theory and research design, (3) professional objectives, (4) the practical skills necessary for archaeological fieldwork, laboratory work, and data analysis; (5) oral and writing skills necessary for professional

communication.

At the time each student enters the program, he or she is assigned a temporary faculty advisor to act until the M.A. Committee is formed at the end of the first year. A required series of core courses provides basic training in general anthropology, archaeological theory, research design and analytical skills. Through a written contract, the student and the Committee formalize an individual program of study through which the student gains the special expertise necessary to accomplish his or her professional goals. This contract generally includes course work, directed reading, and independent study.

Courses are normally taken for three years in the M.A./Ph.D. or Ph.D. program, with a student taking three courses per quarter (the third course will be the TA Practicum, Anth 501, if the student is serving as a Teaching Assistant). A total of three core archaeology courses and 2 core seminar requirements are required for the M.A. degree; remaining courses are specified in the individual contracts. In the spring quarter of the second year of study, the student takes a qualifying comprehensive examination that focuses on a topical specialization, method and theory, and regional culture history. A satisfactory performance in the above requirements is necessary to attain the M.A. degree.

A research paper is due in fall quarter of the third year. Upon completion of all of the requirements for the M.A. degree, the research paper, and one additional core course, the student writes the dissertation proposal. Once this proposal has been approved by the Ph.D. committee and the student completes an oral defense of the proposal the student is advanced to candidacy.

Once candidacy is achieved, the student begins work on the dissertation which, when completed, must be approved by the Ph.D. committee. After the dissertation is approved the student is awarded the Ph.D. degree. Presentation of the dissertation research in a public colloquium is highly desirable.

Time to Degree: Students in the Graduate Program of the Department of Anthropology are expected to complete the M.A. with the intention of advancing to Ph.D. candidacy and completing the Ph.D. degree. All students are expected to make satisfactory progress in the program to reach these Time To-Degree milestones: M.A. (4 years), Advance to Candidacy (4 years if admitted with an M.A., 5 years without), complete the Ph.D. (7 years if admitted with an M.A., 8 years without).

THE MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) PROGRAM

The graduate program in Anthropology is a combined M.A./Ph.D. program, with the Ph.D. degree as the ultimate objective. Most students entering the department will work first towards their M.A. degree in Anthropology. Students who already have an M.A. degree in Anthropology will work out with their advisory Committee a specific program for advancement towards Ph.D. candidacy.

The requirements for the M.A. degree for students in the M.A./Ph.D. program are as follows:

1) Formation of an M.A. Advisory Committee, regular discussion of progress with Committee members, and submission of a contract specifying the student's program of study and research leading to the Ph.D.

2) At least 36 units of course work. (It is not unusual for students to take as many as 72 units in the course of the M.A. program.)

- Of these 36 units, there is a minimum of 24 graduate units (excluding such courses as Anth 501, 597, 598, and 599.
- A maximum of 4 units of 596 (directed reading and research) may be counted as part of the 24 graduate units.
- Students may take upper division undergraduate courses. Units from lower division undergraduate courses will NOT count towards degree.
- Students are required to take three archaeology core seminars, plus the two general anthropology core seminars.
- Students are strongly encouraged to develop good breadth in other subfields of Anthropology by taking courses in those areas.

3) In the spring quarter of the second year, students must pass a comprehensive examination. Failure to comply with this or any other requirement set forth in these guidelines may result in a request to the Graduate Dean that the student be placed on academic probation and ultimately dismissed. Requests to defer or delay requirements due to extraordinary circumstances must be submitted in writing to the department for consideration.

4) The student must clear up any incomplete grades before the M.A. can be awarded. 5)

Students must be registered the quarter they receive the M.A.

The M.A. program in Archaeology is divided into two years. The requirements for these two years are as follows:

<u>During the first year the student must:</u>

1) Form an M.A. committee. At the end of the first year, the student will ask three UC ladder faculty members to serve on his or her master's committee. This should consist of three faculty members from the Department of Anthropology; the chair should belong to the archaeology subfield, but faculty from other subfields may be members of the committee if they are appropriate to the student's interests.

A. Committee members are mentors, in professional and scholarly matters, and are expected to guide the student throughout his or her graduate education. Committee responsibilities include general advising, as well as the more specific work of evaluating students' annual reports, self-assessments, contracts, M.A. papers, research papers,

funding and dissertation proposals, and dissertations. The committee's purpose is to assess the students' special needs, strengths, and weaknesses and to assist in developing the best program possible. Committee members are expected to help students prepare for doctoral advancement and to participate in the oral exam that is required for advancement. Students are expected to work closely with their committees throughout their graduate careers and to keep their members informed about activities and plans. This information is necessary if the committees are to represent the students' interests in the department and to provide advice.

B. Once the committee members have been contacted and have agreed to serve, the student will complete the department's M.A. Committee form which provides a written record of committee membership. The form is submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

File the department M.A. Committee Form with the Graduate Program Coordinator by the end of Winter quarter.

C. If students decide to change their committees they must have the consent of the new member, inform all members of the current committee, and secure the approval of the department chair. When changing M.A. committee member(s), the student needs to fill out the departmental Change of Committee Member form and file it with the Graduate Program Coordinator. Changing a Ph.D. committee member(s) requires a Graduate Division Change of Ph.D. Committee form.

2) Draw up a contract, in consultation with the committee, which is due at the end of spring quarter of the first year.

By the end of the first year, each student will arrange an assessment meeting with all the members of the committee, the purpose being to discuss the individual's background qualifications and interests and to help set up a suitable program of study and research. The student will prepare for the assessment interview by writing a brief summary of his or her background in anthropology and presenting a draft of the contract to the committee. The guidelines for writing the Ph.D. Competency Contract can be found below and a sample contract can be found on the anthropology website.

3) Take the Race, Racism and Anti-racism in Anthropology general core Seminar (Anth 203) if offered (they may cycle every other year).

4) Take the Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology general core Seminar (Anth 205) if offered (they may cycle every other year)

5) Take the archaeology core courses if offered (they cycle every other year).

<u>During the second year the student must:</u>

1) Take the archaeology and general anthropology core courses if you have not already taken them.

2) Take the comprehensive examination in the spring quarter.

Core Courses

Five core courses are to be taken during the first two years; they must be taken for letter grades. These are the following:

- Anth 201A. Classical Archaeological Theory
- Anth 201B. Contemporary Archaeological Theory
- Anth 203. Race, Racism and Anti-racism in Anthropology
- Anth 205. Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology
- Anth 245A. Quantitative Data Analysis Archaeology

CAPSTONE REQUIREMENT: Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive exam for the Archaeology specialization is administered in Spring quarter of the second year. Students take a written comprehensive examination in the following three areas: (1) topical specialization; (2) analytical theory, method and technique; and (3) regional culture history. In consultation with their advisor and committees, students will prepare a bibliography in Fall quarter of their second year for each area in order to prepare for the exams. Students will have a day for each area exam, which will be between 2000 and 3000 words. After taking the exam, students will meet by the end of Spring quarter with their entire committee to discuss the results. A passing qualifying examination demonstrates competency in the literature relevant to their regional and methodological specialization(s) and the ability to communicate that knowledge effectively.Exam Scores: Ph.D. Pass (continue to the Ph.D.), M.A. Pass (a recommendation of probation to the Graduate Dean), or Fail. Students who fail the exam will have one regular quarter to take it again (for Spring exam, deadline is the end of following Fall quarter), with the maximum possible score for a re-take being Pass. If the deadline is not met, the student will be recommended to the Graduate Dean for academic probation. If a passing score has not been awarded by the deadline at the end of the Spring quarter a year after initial comps, the student will not be awarded the M.A .and will be recommended to the Graduate Dean for dismissal.

POST MASTERS ASSESSMENT

Post-Master's Assessment: Upon completion of the Master's degree, the faculty will assess the student's overall progress in graduate study. The student should submit the following documentation as input to the review: unofficial transcripts; the student's comprehensive examination; CV. The student will receive a written evaluation of the faculty's assessment of their development, their promise for independent, innovative, and original research, and for completion of doctoral study.

THE DOCTORAL (PH.D.) PROGRAM

A student who continues on to the Ph.D. program will form his/her Ph.D. Committee and work towards advancement to Ph.D. candidacy. Students are expected to take a full course load their third year in order to fulfill contract requirements. The Department of Anthropology requires students to advance to candidacy by the end of their fifth year in the graduate program. Students formally advance to doctoral candidacy upon the committee's approval of research papers and dissertation proposal and successful completion of the oral defense. Students not advanced to candidacy by the end of the fifth year may be subject to academic probation and department monitoring.

Students must have all requirements for their advancement to candidacy completed and approved by their committee before carrying out the project contained in the Ph.D. proposal. Once advanced, students may pursue independent studies in the department pending departure for the field.

The requirements for advancement to Ph.D. candidacy are as follows:

1) Form the Ph.D. Committee, which may have a membership different from the M.A. committee. As in the case of the M.A. Committee, three members must be Anthropology Department faculty, and the chair must be a member of the archaeology subfield. In addition, committee members may be included from other departments, if the student's interests warrant; these members are in addition to the three Anthropology faculty.

    File the Ph.D. Form I with the Graduate Division
    File the Conflict of Interest Form

2) Continue to take courses until all contract requirements are filled.

3) Take the core course in professionalism, Anth 239A.

4) Complete a research paper. This is an article-length paper that demonstrates skills in problem formulation, data analysis, and scientific argument, as well as literary competence. All members of the Ph.D. Committee must approve and sign the paper.

    File the Research Paper Approval form with the Graduate Program Coordinator

5) Write a dissertation proposal, specifying the intended topic, theoretical framework, geographic area of fieldwork, and methods of research leading to the Ph.D. dissertation. The proposal should take the form of an NSF Dissertation Improvement Grant to fund the student's dissertation research. All members of the Ph.D. Committee must approve and sign the proposal.

    File the Dissertation Proposal Approval form with the Graduate Program Coordinator

6) Oral defense of the dissertation proposal. An oral defense of the proposal is required of all students. The defense is open to other students and faculty. The candidate is expected to present an oral summary of her or his proposal and to answer questions posed by the committee and by others in attendance.

7) Graduate Division requires the student be registered for three consecutive quarters prior to the quarter of taking the examination and be registered the quarter the student intends to advance to doctoral candidacy. Students' spring quarter registration protects their student status over the summer until fall quarter (i.e., students taking their qualifying exams during the summer do not have to pay summer fees).

After fulfilling all specified requirements, the student is advanced to candidacy. *File the Ph.D. Form II with the Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Division*

Only after a student is advanced to candidacy can he or she register for Anth 599: Dissertation Research and Preparation.

Requirements for the Ph.D. degree:

1) Fieldwork of at least three academic quarters' duration. Ideally students receive funding for their dissertation research in time to begin fieldwork during their fourth year, but it often takes longer than that, and if they are unable to begin field research until their fifth year they are still on a reasonable schedule. A student can expect to spend a year or a year and a half in the field, and it will take at least a year to write the dissertation after completing the field research. The Department of Anthropology sets a deadline of eight years to complete the doctorate.

2) A dissertation (normally based on field research).

When the dissertation has been completed and submitted, the student's Committee may either approve it or suggest further revisions. The Department does not require that students take an oral exam on the dissertation or that they engage in an oral defense for the Archaeology and Sociocultural specializations, but the University requires that a form be filed that waives the orals. The student needs to file the Graduate Division's Ph.D. Form III-A, Waiver of Final Exam for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Students are advised to obtain committee signatures on this form at the same time committee members are signing the dissertation pages. When all the members of the Committee have approved and signed the dissertation, the Ph.D. degree is awarded.

File the Ph.D. Form IIIA, "Waiver of the Final Exam…," as well as other forms required by the Graduate Division, with the Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Division

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION OF COMPETENCY CONTRACT IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Your contract should document your past and intended coursework and other academic activities that contribute to providing adequate breadth in anthropology, archaeology and your chosen

research specialization. It may include courses taken as an undergraduate as well as courses you have taken or intend to take as a graduate student, whether in this or another department. It may also include various kinds of experiences particularly relevant to your education, such as a research experience that provides the chance to develop an expertise.

Your Contract should include the following elements:

I. ANTHROPOLOGY BREADTH: A list of upper division and graduate courses in anthropology and related disciplines (e.g., sociology, biology, linguistics) that provide breadth of knowledge
in branches of anthropology other than archaeology. These should be categorized as follows:

A. Cultural Anthropology
B. Biological Anthropology
C. Other anthropological subdisciplines such as Linguistics
D. Other disciplines

II. ARCHAEOLOGY BREADTH: A list of upper division and graduate archaeology courses that provide breadth of knowledge in the subdiscipline. Core courses or other courses or experiences that have exempted you from certain core courses should also be listed. All should be categorized as follows:

A. General method and theory, including history of the discipline
B. Field and lab techniques, including collections analytical approaches
C. Quantitative analysis
D. Area prehistory

III. SPECIALIZATIONS: A list of courses and other academic activities that provide training and experience in your specialization(s). In addition to courses taken in our department, these might include specialized field schools, courses in other disciplines such as geography or biology, and relevant research experiences. These should be listed under as many of the following categories as are applicable, and the specialization(s) should be indicated under "Area of Emphasis":

A. Area specialization(s), e.g., Andean region
B. Topical specialization(s), e.g., complex societies
C. Technical specialization, e.g., human osteological analysis
D. Language competency, e.g., Spanish for those working in Spanish-speaking countries

IV. TEACHING EXPERIENCE: If you are, were, or plan to be a TA, indicate TAship under the "Requirements Satisfied By" column. Some of you may obtain teaching experience by other means.

V. RESEARCH PAPER: Give a tentative or actual title of the paper in the "Met By" column.

VI. DISSERTATION TOPIC: Indicate at least a tentative topic, even if you are still unsure of the direction of your specialization.

VII. SIGNATURES: The contract is a two-page form. It provides spaces for the signatures of you, your advisor, and two other archaeology faculty you have selected to review your contract.

File the original Contract with the Graduate Program Coordinator and provide a copy for each committee member.

GENERAL POLICY ON DATA PAPERS, PROPOSALS, AND DISSERTATIONS FOR SUBMISSION TO FACULTY COMMITTEES

Archaeology faculty are instituting policy guidelines for the (1) timing of submission of data papers, dissertation proposals, and dissertations to committees, and (2) expectations for revisions of these documents. The policy is meant as both a revision and clarification of current faculty expectations regarding timing of document submission to faculty committees and student-based revisions to these documents.

As a general rule, data papers, proposals, and dissertations should be submitted to faculty advisors and committees **during the academic year** (Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters). Faculty will not process these documents during the summer quarter. Please note that this includes scheduling the proposal defense for advancing to candidacy, which should be also scheduled during the formal academic year (Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters).

More specific expectations are detailed below for (1) data papers and proposals, and (2) dissertations.

(1) Timeline for Submission & Revisions for Data Papers and Dissertation Proposals (please note that this timeline represents a **minimum** process of reading/revision of **2 months**) a. Submission of completed data paper and/or proposal to advisor = advisor has a minimum of 2 weeks to read and comment on each document

b. Revisions of data paper/proposal based on Advisor comments = students should expect the revisions to take a minimum of 2 weeks for each document

c. Submission of completed data paper/proposal to committee, after revisions made based on advisor's comments = committee members have a minimum of 2 weeks to read and comment on each document

d. Additional revisions based on committee comments = students should expect the revisions to take a minimum of 2 weeks for each document

Please note that revisions could potentially require more than 2 weeks work, and adjust your timeline accordingly.

Be aware that the process of initial submission of the data paper and proposal to advancing to

candidacy **will each take a minimum of 2 months**, and adjust your timeline accordingly.

(2) Timeline for Submission & Revisions for Dissertations (please note that this timeline represents a **minimum** process of reading/revision of **4 months**)

a. Submission of completed dissertation to advisor = advisor has a minimum of 1 month to read and comment

b. Revisions of dissertation based on Advisor comments = students should expect the revisions to take a minimum of 1 month

c. Submission of completed dissertation to committee, after revisions made based on advisor's comments = committee members have a minimum of 1 month to read and comment

d. Additional revisions based on Committee comments = students should expect the revisions to take a minimum of 1 month

Please note that revisions could potentially require more than a month's work, and adjust your timeline accordingly.

Be aware that the process of initial submission to filing the dissertation **will take a minimum of 4 months**, and adjust your timeline accordingly.

ARCHAEOLOGY RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

The Ph.D. program in archaeology requires completion of a substantial research paper that reports the quantified analysis of a set of primary archaeological data. The graduate student research paper requirement is based on an *American Antiquity* publication model, and it is this model that is used to dictate the form, content, and evaluation of the papers.

I. Purpose of the Paper

A. To provide a context within which the student can acquire experience in professional research and writing.

B. To foster a close working relationship between the student and archaeology faculty members.

C. To stimulate and guide the student in writing a carefully prepared paper that could potentially be published.

D. To permit the student to demonstrate professional research abilities, including problem formulation, analysis, and exposition.

II. Content of the Paper

A. The paper must present a piece of original research; it may not be mainly a survey of literature on a topic or a critique of another analysis (although in treating the research topic, the paper may include these elements).

B. This paper must take the form of a report on an original analysis of archaeological materials that is directed to the understanding of a specific research topic. The data used in the analysis should be in quantified form and a quantitative argument should be presented.

1. These data may result from the student's laboratory analysis of collections or the data may come from published or unpublished sources (e.g., the data analyzed might be a spatial distribution of sites in an area; or the frequencies of faunal remains from a site).

2. The paper should be directly related to the student's regional or theoretical/methodological interests, or both. The data should ideally come from the student's region of interest, but this is not required. The student is not expected to have participated in the fieldwork that collected the primary data.

C. If possible, a paper should be written that could be submitted for publication in an anthropological journal.

1. Attention to this point is critical in preparing the paper. An article, not a thesis, is what is required. Thus, the paper should achieve a balance of the different sections of the paper (e.g., background information, problem statement, description of the data, laboratory, and analytical procedures) that is appropriate to an article presentation. This is in contrast to a thesis presentation, where more detail in the background and descriptive sections ordinarily would be expected.

2. There are many national and regional journals, for instance, that might publish the research paper (for example, *American Antiquity*, *Journal of Field Archaeology*, *Journal of Anthropological Science*, *North American Archaeologist, Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology*, *Kiva*, or *Plains Anthropologist*).

III. Selection and Approval of the Research Topic and Preparation for the Paper

A. The identification of a problem and the development of relevant data are among the most difficult jobs the student faces in preparing the paper. The student should seek advice from the faculty in this regard.

1. It is necessary to identify a research topic that can be addressed in a paper of this scope, and to locate a data set that can, with a reasonable investment of analytical effort, yield information relevant to the topic.

2. In order to meet the deadlines set out, it is expected that by the fourth

quarter of residence, a student will begin to work on identifying the paper topic and relevant data.

B. The student has considerable latitude in selecting a paper topic; however, the topic must be approved by the student's committee.

C. Anthropology 245A, Quantitative Applications in Archaeology, will provide the analytical skills necessary for the paper.

D. The student may enroll in up to eight units of Anthropology 598 in order to finish writing the paper.

IV. Relationship to Graduate Course Papers

A. In many cases, the research paper may originate as a paper prepared for a graduate course or directed reading course under the sponsorship of a faculty member.

B. However, a paper that is sufficient for a seminar may need expansion of scope or some other modification before it can fulfill the requirement of the research paper.

C. The paper may also originate with work begun before coming to UCSB.

VI. Format of Papers

A. While there is no minimum or maximum page length, the scope of each paper should be such that its length falls within the range of standard journal articles. (Usually less than 40 double spaced pages of text, exclusive of figures, tables, and bibliography.)

B. Final form for a paper is defined to be the form in which a professional paper would be submitted to a journal for review, i.e., it must be a complete, clean, double-spaced, fully edited typescript that includes an abstract, complete bibliography, and final figures and tables.

1. The format, including that of the bibliography, should follow that used by *American Antiquity*. (Consult the most recent style guide on the journal's website.)

2. The paper should be carefully written, with special attention given to style as well as to spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Avoid the use of unnecessary jargon, but do not be afraid to use new terminology if it is appropriate.

3. The *Chicago Manual of Style* should be used as a guide in writing the paper.

VI. Review of Paper Drafts

A. A student may request that one or more faculty members review a draft of the paper prior to any deadline.

B. The student should allow at least two weeks for such a preliminary review. C.

Students are strongly urged to avail themselves of this opportunity for review of a draft.

D. The student must not use this preliminary faculty review of a paper as a substitute for careful editing and proofreading. Faculty members will return poorly edited or proofread papers without review.

VII. Evaluation of Papers

A. Papers must have a content and organization appropriate for a journal article. They must be of professional quality, of article length, and of course, must be in final form. Papers that do not satisfy these criteria will be rejected. A paper that has been accepted for publication will not necessarily be acceptable to the faculty review committee.

B. The final version of the dissertation proposal must be reviewed and accepted by all members of the student's M.A. committee.