

McGill University

*Department of  
Anthropology*

***Graduate Program Guidelines***  
(Fall 2017 to Present)

Last Update: July 22, 2021

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## Graduate Studies

The Department places a high priority on research and on maintaining an excellent graduate program. Each year, we admit a small number of highly qualified applicants for studies leading to the MA and PhD degrees in Anthropology. Our students benefit from close supervision and from an engaged and dynamic graduate student community. In maintaining a high staff/student ratio, we can offer our graduate students flexibility and personalized attention in designing their programs according to their special interests. The program is particularly suitable to students who are self-directed.

## MA and PhD Advisory Committees

The ongoing framework of the MA and PhD is provided by the relationship between students and their advisory committee. The committee consists of a supervisor and two or more additional members. The supervisor and one other committee member must be tenured or tenure-track members of the Department. Other committee members may be from outside the Department and can also be from other institutions. Although outside members may provide additional expertise in particular areas, it is advisable to have three regular members of the Department on the committee to ensure continuity in the event of unanticipated circumstances.

The role of the supervisor is to actively support and encourage the intellectual development of the student's work and to advise in a timely fashion on program organization and administrative arrangements. The contributions of other committee members are more specifically academic. Through regular consultation with the supervisor and other committee members, the student receives informed guidance and constructive criticism from at least three points of view, thus guaranteeing a reasonably broad base of advice. Students are expected to keep in close touch with their supervisors and committee members on a regular basis throughout the program of study, and to seek guidance at each state of work (program planning, preparation of research proposals, grant applications, fieldwork, and writing research papers, theses, and dissertations). In return, students can expect supervisors to guide these stages of research accordingly, with timely and constructive feedback.

Students select the members of their advisory committees according to their research interests. The Graduate Program Director (GPD) may help students identify potential committee members, as can the supervisor. However, students are free to make their own decisions regarding academic supervision throughout the course of their program. Students may change the composition of the committee at any time but must keep the Graduate Program Director, the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC), and their supervisor informed of any changes.

For both the MA and PhD program, it is in the student's interest to finalize the composition of their committee early as early as possible; the Department expects students to select their supervisors and to form their committees early in the first (Fall) semester of the first year of their program.

## Professional Development Seminar (Prosem) Coordinator

This committee member plans and oversees the graduate student professional seminar or “Prosem” for the entire academic year. The Professional Development Seminar Coordinator is responsible for the following organizational activities:

- Works with the speaker’s series coordinator and graduate program chair to ensure the Proseminar fits into our regularly scheduled graduate courses and doesn’t conflict with the speaker’s series.
- Reviews the previous syllabi to review topics
- Makes an effort to update the syllabus with any new topics that have arisen in the previous year. E.g., in Winter 2021, we added a presentation on gender, intersectionality and power in academia, and one on working with digital media.
- Creates a full syllabus for fall and winter as it is a two-semester course.
- Finds and coordinates with the external speakers to cover expertise not available among current faculty members
- Follows-up and coordinates with all guest presenters
- Managing the MyCourses website for the seminar includes updating resources, the optional readings and any power-point presentations.

## Research Objectives and Student Progress

Graduate students should meet with their supervisor as well as with committee members at the beginning of each academic year to plan coursework and chart objectives. In addition, the [Memo of Understanding form](#) should be completed and signed by supervisor and student and uploaded by the student to MyProgress.

By the end of the second term, all students are required to submit the [Graduate Research Progress Tracking Report](#) in which their committee evaluates their progress. Students are required to fill out and submit their [Graduate Research Progress Tracking Report](#) each year until they complete their degree. The Graduate Program Director oversees students ensuring that they are making satisfactory progress toward their degree. If research progress is unsatisfactory, a new set of objectives should be developed for the student at the meeting and recorded.

N.B.: Students with two unsatisfactory evaluations may be required to withdraw from their program of study. These two unsatisfactory evaluations need not be consecutive.

Students generally enter the doctoral program as PhD2, holding an MA. [In special circumstances students without an MA can enter the doctoral program as PhD1 \(see here\).](#)

## MA Degree

The Department of Anthropology offers two broad kinds of master's degrees: a one-year, non-thesis MA, and a two-year MA with thesis.

### One-year Non-Thesis MA

The MA in Anthropology non-Thesis provides an intensive, course-based training in the fundamentals of anthropological theory and methodology over three semesters. The program is designed as a rigorous and comprehensive preparation for subsequent specialization in sociocultural anthropology, archaeology, or medical anthropology at the PhD level.

### Two-year Thesis MA

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) regulations require the MA program to be completed within three years of initial registration. GPS strictly enforces these time limits.

The ideal time for completion of the MA with thesis program is approximately 20 months, but it could be as short as 12 months. Course requirements and the research proposal are completed in the first year. The research itself is normally carried out during the summer. The second academic year is devoted to writing the thesis, which should ideally be submitted in time for the spring Graduation deadline of the second year of graduate study.

Admission to the MA Program in Anthropology is open competitively to students holding an Honours or Major BA in Anthropology. Outstanding candidates with BA degrees in other disciplines but with substantial background related to Anthropology are sometimes admitted on the condition that they complete a specified number of additional Anthropology courses. MA applicants should have at least a tentative commitment to a particular sub-discipline, approach.

## Residence Requirements

*Residence requirements* are the number of terms students must be registered on a full-time basis to complete their programs. The MA program has a minimum residence requirement of three full-time semesters.<sup>1</sup>

The student's program of work, which is based on their research interests and proposed MA research, is developed in consultation with the supervisor and the other members of their advisory committee. It consists of four courses (seminars or tutorials), a research proposal, and the thesis.

Students are required to call a meeting of their committee before the end of first semester to discuss their progress. [The Form](#) to be signed by the student and all committee members present at the meeting specifies the program and outline the research plans and objectives. A copy must be signed by all parties and uploaded onto MyProgress.

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<sup>1</sup> In the MA program, students pay *full-time* fees for three semesters or "residency terms". Information regarding this policy can be found in the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Calendar (Current graduate student fees are listed at: <http://www.mcgill.ca/student-accounts/fees/grad/>)

## Courses

MA Students take four courses in the form of seminars and/or tutorials. **Students must complete three of the four courses during the first year of study (Sept - May) to be allowed to register for the second year.**

Each year, the Department offers graduate seminars that reflect the interests of both faculty members and graduate students. Students are encouraged to organize their study programs around these course offerings. Students are urged to attend and discuss their research interests with professors. The Department offers a Professional Seminar (Prosem), which discusses professional issues in the practice of anthropology. **Students register for this compulsory course (ANTH609D1/ANTH609D2) in the first year of study in the same way as other courses.** It is graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis; the Prosem coordinator tracks students' attendance, which is mandatory. If they wish, students may re-attend certain Prosem sessions of their interest in later years of their programs (e.g., on Ethics, or Research Proposals).

The seminar and/or tutorial courses should be directed toward and converge in the thesis research. One of the four courses should be an area study to provide historical, geographical, and ethnographic or archaeological background in the student's area of interest. For subjects not covered by our Department, seminars or tutorials in other Departments may be arranged, **but no more than two of these can be credited towards the student's degree program.** The student should coordinate with their supervisor for their advisory committee's authorization of these courses.

Courses usually require written work in the form of a term paper or a series of shorter papers. Course papers are limited to 25 pages, including Bibliography. In grading, emphasis is placed on the structure and organization of the paper. Students must demonstrate that they can pose a question, collect, and analyze data, and present the argument cogently.

## Research Proposal

[The MA research proposal](#) is normally presented before the end of the first academic year and must be presented before the MA research is undertaken. The proposal sets out the research problem, the theoretical approach, and the methodology. It must specify the measures taken to ensure that ethical considerations are satisfied. All members of the student's committee must approve the proposal, which should not exceed 10-12 pages of text, double-sided (Times New Roman font, 12 point). Students who have not finalized the research proposal by the end of the first year of residence must call a meeting of their committee to discuss their progress.

Students must then present the proposal to a formal meeting of their committee. The student and advisory committee members at the meeting must sign the [Approval of MA Thesis Proposal form](#) outlining the research objectives, the methodological approach, and the length of stay in the field (if required). A copy is deposited in the student's file; copies are given to each committee member

## Ethics Review

If applicable, students must submit the [proposal for ethical approval](#) to the University Research Ethics Board (REB) before leaving for the field. Since this is often a [lengthy process, usually involving revisions, students are encouraged to apply as early as possible.](#)

## Research

MA thesis research usually involves fieldwork, labwork, or archival or library research over the summer between the two years of the program.

## Thesis

The MA thesis is a demonstration of the student's ability to carry out anthropological research project in all its aspects: defining a problem, placing it in theoretical and factual contexts, data collection and analysis, drawing of conclusions, and writing up the report. Consult [here](#).

## Length

The thesis must not exceed 60 pages, including bibliography and appendices. Both student and supervisor must prepare a written request to the Graduate Committee for permission to submit a longer document.

## Preparation

The thesis must meet the requirements of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies regarding correct format. Thesis preparation and submission guidelines and deadlines as well as thesis submission forms are available on the [GPS web page](#).

## MA Program Options

### 1-YEAR NON-THESIS OPTION

The MA in Anthropology non-Thesis provides an intensive, course-based training in the fundamentals of anthropological theory and methodology over three semesters. The program is designed as a rigorous and comprehensive preparation for subsequent specialization in sociocultural anthropology, archaeology, or medical anthropology at the PhD level.

| <b>Required Courses</b> |                            | <b>Credits</b> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| ANTH 602                | Theory 1                   | (3)            |
| ANTH 603                | Theory 2                   | (3)            |
| ANTH 609                | Proseminar in Anthropology | (6)            |
| ANTH 690                | Research Paper 1           | (6)            |
| ANTH 691                | Research Paper 2           | (6)            |
| ANTH 692                | Research Paper 3           | (6)            |

#### **Complementary Courses** (15 credits)

15 credits to be chosen from among 500-level or above departmental course offerings and to be determined by the student's area of study.

**Total Credits** 45

### DEVELOPMENT STUDIES THESIS OPTION

The Development Studies Option is a cross-disciplinary M.A. program offered as an option within existing M.A. programs in the departments of Geography, History, Political Science, Anthropology, Economics, and Sociology.

| <b>Required courses</b> |                      | <b>Credits</b> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| ANTH 694                | MA Thesis Tutorial 1 | (6)            |
| ANTH 695                | MA Thesis Tutorial 2 | (6)            |
| ANTH 699                | MA Thesis            | (21)           |
| INTD 657                | Development Studies  | (3)            |

#### **Complimentary**

9 credits to be chosen from among 500-level or above departmental course offerings and to be determined by the student's area of study.

**Total Credits** 45

## ENVIRONMENT STUDIES THESIS OPTION

The Environment Option is aimed at students who wish to use interdisciplinary approaches in their graduate research on environmental issues and wish to benefit from interactions with students from a wide range of different disciplines.

| <b>Required courses</b> |                                   | <b>Credits</b> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| ANTH 694                | MA Thesis Tutorial 1              | (6)            |
| ANTH 699                | MA Thesis                         | (21)           |
| ENVR 615                | Intr. Disc. Envir. Sustainability | (3)            |

### **Complimentary**

3 credits from:

ENVR 610 Foundations of Environmental Policy (3 credits)

ENVR 614 Mobilizing Research for Sustainability (3 credits)

3 credits from:

ENVR 585 Readings in Environment 2 (3 credits)

ENVR 630 Civilization and Environment (3 credits)

ENVR 680 Topics in Environment 4 (3 credits)

*or 3 credits to be chosen from among 500 level or above departmental course offerings, recommended by the Advisory Committee and approved by the Environment Option Committee.*

9 credits to be chosen from among 500 level or above departmental course offerings, as approved by the advisory committee.

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Total Credits</b> | <b>45</b> |
|----------------------|-----------|

## *MSE ENVIRONMENT OPTIONAL COURSES*

|          |                                |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| ENVR 519 | Global Environmental Politics  |
| ENVR 544 | Env. Measurement & Modelling   |
| ENVR 580 | Topics in Environment 3        |
| ENVR 611 | The Economy of Nature          |
| ENVR 620 | Environ and Health of Species  |
| ENVR 622 | Sustainable Landscapes         |
| ENVR 630 | Civilization and Environment 1 |
| ENVR 680 | Topics in Environment 4        |

*or other graduate course recommended by the advisory committee and pre-approved by MSE.*

## GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES THESIS OPTION

The Graduate Option in Gender and Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary program for students who meet degree requirements in Anthropology (and other participating departments and faculties) who wish to earn 6 credits of approved coursework focusing on gender and women's studies, and issues in feminist research and methods. The thesis must be on a topic centrally related to gender and/or women's studies.

| <b><u>Required courses</u></b> |                               | <b><u>Credits</u></b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ANTH 694                       | MA Thesis Tutorial 1          | (6)                   |
| ANTH 695                       | MA Thesis Tutorial 2          | (6)                   |
| ANTH 699                       | MA Thesis                     | (21)                  |
| WMST 601                       | Feminist Theories and Methods | (3)                   |

### **Complimentary**

6 credits to be chosen from among 500 level or above departmental course offerings, as approved by the advisory committee.

3 credits of coursework at the M.A. level relating to gender/women's studies, which may be taken outside the Department

OR

ANTH 615 Seminar in Medical Anthropology (3 credits)

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Total Credits</b> | <b>45</b> |
|----------------------|-----------|

## MA (THESIS) IN MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The Department of Anthropology offers a two-year MA program in Medical Anthropology. The MA degree is awarded by the Department of Anthropology. Following the award of the MA, students may specialize in Medical Anthropology within the regular PhD program of the Department of Anthropology. (The Department does not offer a PhD specifically in Medical Anthropology.)

The program conforms to the general framework of Thesis-option Master's studies in our Department, but involves some special requirements and options because of its transdisciplinary nature.

Students are required to take four courses, including two seminars in Medical Anthropology (ANTH 615 and HSSM 605).

| <b><u>Required courses</u></b> |                       | <b><u>Credits</u></b> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| ANTH 694                       | MA Thesis Tutorial 1  | (6)                   |
| ANTH 695                       | MA Thesis Tutorial 2  | (6)                   |
| ANTH 699                       | MA Thesis             | (21)                  |
| ANTH 615                       | Sem. In Medical Anth. | (3)                   |
| HSSM 605                       | Medical Anthropology  | (3)                   |

### **Complimentary**

6 credits to be chosen from among 500 level or above departmental course offerings, as approved by the advisory committee.

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Total Credits</b> | <b>45</b> |
|----------------------|-----------|

## Timetable for completing Thesis MA requirements

The Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies Office (GPSO) requires that the MA program be completed within 24 months of initial registration.

### **MA 1**

#### **Fall Term**

- Work with supervisor to select committee members and courses for the year
- Work with supervisor on Thesis Tutorial I (i.e., the research project)
- Take two courses
- Attend the Proseminar and Speaker Series
- In October, submit fellowship applications

#### **Winter Term**

- Work with supervisor on Thesis Tutorial II (i.e., continuation of Tutorial I)
- Take two courses
- Attend the Proseminar and Speaker Series
- Submit project to Ethics Review Board
- If necessary, plan for travel/fieldwork to be conducted during summer months (visas, research permits, etc.)

### **MA 2**

- Complete any outstanding coursework
- Write thesis

## McGill Anthropology MA students applying for the PhD

McGill Anthropology MA 2 students who are in good standing and on track to finish their MA program in the allotted time can, in consultation with their supervisor and committee members, apply for the PhD program. **PhD applications from McGill MA students will be considered alongside those of other applicants.**

## PhD Degree

The PhD is a research degree based on a significant original contribution to the discipline. It is entirely oriented to carrying out a single major research project and the presentation and defence of the research findings in the form of a PhD dissertation.

### Admission Criteria

Admission to the PhD program is open competitively to students with a Master's degree in Anthropology, although we may admit candidates with degrees in related disciplines. In exceptional cases, students only holding a BA may be admitted to the program. In such cases, students enter PhD1 and take an additional year of coursework in lieu of a master's degree.

All applications must be received by the university by **December 15<sup>th</sup>**. Applications are not considered at other times. Applications are reviewed by the Graduate Committee and final decisions are made by the Department in early Spring for admission in September. We look for students who can benefit from the opportunity to design and carry out their own programs. We put great weight on a high level of intellectual capacity and achievement. University grades are taken as a good index of these factors; the students we admit usually have undergraduate grade point averages of 3.7/4 and above. Copies of research papers are essential for our assessment. For PhD applicants in thesis MA programs, a copy of the MA thesis, in draft or final form, is mandatory. A TOEFL examination is required for international students unless they have a degree from an English-language institution.

The stage of development of the candidate's intellectual and research interests is another important factor. Our program caters to students who are self-directed; therefore, applicants must have a clear focus and well-defined objectives. PhD applicants should have a well-delineated research problem. We give serious attention to the statement of research and interest plans, evaluating its degree of focus, intellectual sophistication, and creativity.

The decision to admit depends on a match of the student's interests with faculty expertise and is contingent upon sufficient departmental resources. Some applicants with excellent records, worthwhile interests, and promising futures are not admitted to our Department because we are not able to serve their needs. Graduate applicants are not admitted unless a faculty member agrees to be the supervisor, and at least one additional faculty member agrees to be on the student's committee. The person who agrees to be supervisor automatically becomes the student's interim advisor.

## Residence Requirements

Residency refers to the number of terms (or years) students must be registered on a full-time basis to complete their program. Students are not permitted to graduate until they have fulfilled the residence requirement (or paid the corresponding fees) in their program.

PhD students are required to pay a minimum of 6 full-time terms (if admitted as PhD 2) and 8 full-time semesters (if admitted to PhD 1). If degree requirements are met prior to completion of the residency year (PhD 3), fees for outstanding residency terms will be charged in the final semester of registration. Master's degrees in Anthropology satisfy the first-year residence requirements for the doctoral degree.

According to [GPSO regulations](#), all doctoral candidates may maintain their connection with the University for three years after completing their residence requirements. The time limits are strictly enforced.

## PhD Students admitted for Fall 2017 and thereafter

### PhD 2

Students admitted to the program with an MA begin in PhD 2. The following table illustrates the usual distribution of required courses. (For details about the program of study and requirements for those entering PhD 1, [see below p. 23](#)).

| PhD2                         |                              | PhD3     |  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------|--|
| Fall                         | Winter                       | Fall     | Winter                                 |
| ANTH 602 <i>Theory 1</i>     | ANTH 603 <i>Theory 2</i>     | 1 course | ANTH 701<br><i>Comprehensive Exams</i> |
| 1 course                     | 1 course                     | 1 course | ANTH 702 <i>Proposal Defence</i>       |
| ANTH 609D1 <i>Proseminar</i> | ANTH 609D2 <i>Proseminar</i> |          |  |

**Table 1. PhD2 requirements**

During their PhD 2 year (i.e., the first year of study for most students), students take the anthropology theory sequence (ANTH 602 & 603), the Proseminar, and two additional courses. In the Fall semester of their PhD 3 year, students take two more courses; in the Winter semester of this year, they also prepare and sit for the Comprehensive Exam, complete the Language Requirement, and submit and defend the Research Proposal. Fieldwork starts soon after; the dissertation is ideally submitted one year after the research is completed.

## Study Program

The student's program of work, which is based on his/her research interests and proposed field site, is developed in consultation with the supervisor and the other committee members. It consists of at least six (6) courses, a language examination, and preparation and defence of a research proposal.

By **February** of the PhD 2, year, doctoral students must compose an advisory committee, with whom they are encouraged to have a joint meeting to discuss their progress and to identify likely areas to be covered in their comprehensive exams. The committee will also provisionally discuss the research topic with the student.

## Advisory Committee Composition

The professor who admitted the student serves as the student's interim advisor. The full committee is made up of at least three full-time, tenure or tenure-track faculty members, at least two of whom must be appointed in McGill's Department of Anthropology. The committee must be confirmed by **February 15** of the PhD 2 year.

## REQUIREMENTS

### **Required courses:**

#### **PhD2**

- ANTH 602 Theory 1
- ANTH 603 Theory 2
- ANTH 609D1 *Proseminar in Anthropology* (3 credits)
- ANTH 609D2 *Proseminar in Anthropology* (3 credits)

#### **PhD3**

- ANTH 701 *PhD Comprehensive Examination* (0 credits) [these are the official titles of these courses]
- ANTH 702 *PhD Proposal Defence* (0 credits)

#### **Complementary courses (4 courses, 12 credits from the following):**

12 credits at the 500 and 600 level selected from courses within and/or outside the Department relevant to the student's research area in consultation with the student's supervisor and advisory committee. Archaeology students generally take ANTH505, *Current Advances in Archaeological Theory*.

The recommended distribution of courses is **three** per semester during PhD2 (Fall and Winter) and two in the fall of PhD3 (Fall). (Students, in consultation with their supervisor, may take more courses per semester and finish with the requirements faster.)

A maximum of **two** courses can be taken from programs outside of the Department with the approval of the supervisor and the GPD.

The student may take a maximum of two independent courses.

Normally, the student is expected to take at least one course (and especially the independent study courses) with the supervisor and the committee members.

**Elective courses:** Students may take up to eight (8) additional courses (0 to 24 credits) inside or outside the Department. These may include language and/or methodological training; courses in history or regional studies; or provide other training necessary to the students' research.

### Comprehensive Examination (ANTH 701)

|                           |   |  |                       |
|---------------------------|---|--|-----------------------|
| <b>Comprehensive Exam</b> | 1 | Up to 6 weeks to study   | January- Mid February |
|                           | 2 | Two questions of a list of five prepared by the committee      |                       |
|                           | 3 | Two weeks to respond to the questions with two essays          | Late February         |
|                           | 4 | Comps hearing not more than a week after delivering the essays | Early-Mid March       |
| <b>Research Proposal</b>  | 5 | Preparing the proposal   | Mid-March and April   |
|                           | 6 | Proposal Hearing   | Late April-Early May  |

**Table 2. PhD 3 Winter semester Timeline**

In **November** of the third semester (PhD3), the student and supervisor must set the schedule for the fourth semester in consultation with the full supervisory committee. The student is responsible for ensuring that this happens. At this time the student must also officially register for ANTH 701 (Comprehensive Examination) for the fourth semester (PhD3).

The Comprehensive Examination involves the following steps:

1) The student compiles and distributes to the committee a PDF document that includes the following: a) a 250-word summary describing the dissertation project that outlines the theoretical and research topics that relate to it; b) a list of all graduate courses (including independent study courses) taken at McGill, or other institutions, as part of the PhD program; c) syllabi and bibliographies of all courses taken as part of the program.

2) The bibliography for the comprehensive exam will be based on—but not limited to—the reading lists provided by the student. After reviewing the syllabi and proposal summary the committee will produce five (5) questions for the comprehensive exam (this can be done in person or via email). These questions should be synthetic in nature and ask the student to make connections across relevant theoretical, topical, methodological and empirical materials relevant to the candidate's research areas and topics. **Two** questions should be broadly theoretical and concerned with *General topics in Anthropology*. They are expected to be drawn largely from theory courses such as ANTH 602 and ANTH 603, and, where relevant, comparable courses in archaeology such as ANTH 505 that focus on theory and questions of epistemology. **Three** questions should be related to comprehensive topics as covered by *Other Courses* pertaining to the candidate's general research areas (e.g., Anthropology of Islam, Ecological Anthropology, Medical Anthropology).

3) At the start of the Winter semester the student communicates to their advisory committee, GPD and GPC that they are ready to take the exam, and sets a date for the exam, approximately six weeks later. The student is responsible for coordinating the timing of the comprehensive exam with their committee members, via

doodle poll or some other method.

4) On the day that the written examination is to begin the student receives the questions by email from their supervisor (with a copy to the GPC) and selects two. One is to be drawn from the two questions in the *General Topics in Anthropology* category and the other is to be drawn from the three questions in the *Other Courses* category. The student has two weeks (one per question) to prepare a short essay per each question (minimum of 4,000 words-max. of 6,000 words each). Books and notes are allowed.

5) A week after the written exam is submitted, the committee holds an oral examination of the candidate (maximum of two hours) based on a discussion of the two essays in the context of the student's broader preparation. The committee evaluates student performance both on the two written essays and in the oral defence and grades the exam pass or fail. The supervisor communicates this grade by email to the GPD and GPC with a copy to the student and the committee. A passing exam demonstrates broad knowledge of the candidate's research area (i.e., an ability to think with some of the key concepts in the discipline beyond the specific theories, methods, and concepts the student will employ in their dissertation project) and satisfactory knowledge of the sub-discipline in which the student will write their dissertation. In case of failure, the student has the right to a second oral examination (to be held no later than May of the same calendar year). Failing the second examination results in exclusion from the program.

### Research Proposal and Defence (ANTH 702)

The full PhD committee convenes with the student for the Oral defence of the research proposal; the committee decides if the student is ready to proceed to field research. The committee may pass the proposal, fail it, or suggest that the student postpone leaving for the field, pending revisions. The proposal has been a work-in-progress since the first semester of PhD2 (preparation of grants, essays, and so on). The work must be finalized **no later** than the last two months of the PhD3 Winter semester.

### Language Requirement

The purpose of the language requirement is to ensure that students have access to anthropological literature in at least two languages.

The default language is French. Francophone students can satisfy the language requirement by demonstrating competency in English. With the approval of the Graduate Committee, a language other than French or English may be substituted, if there is significant anthropological literature in that language on the student's research topic.

Typically, the language exam consists of the translation of an academic text, usually a few paragraphs from an article or book in the student's field. Students are responsible for planning for their language exam by contacting the Language Requirement Coordinator. The candidate may use a dictionary in the language being tested, but not a translation dictionary. In consultation with the student's supervisor, the Language Requirement Coordinator (a member of the Graduate Committee) selects a text that is presented to the student on the day of the exam. At a time arranged by the Language Requirement Coordinator, the student writes the exam, which is then corrected by a faculty member who is fluent in the language of the exam.

In cases where is evident that a student is already completely fluent and literate in the language in question, the language requirement can be satisfied if a faculty member who is not on the student's committee certifies in writing that the candidate is fluent in that language.

Instead of taking a language exam administered by the Department, students can also demonstrate

competence by successfully completing two McGill undergraduate language courses at a level approved by GPSO. This usually means 12 credits from the beginner level or at least 6 credits at the intermediate or advanced levels.

The language requirement must be satisfied before fieldwork can take place.

Students are also expected to develop, ideally prior to entry into the field, the linguistic skills necessary for effective research.

## Research Proposal

Dissertations in socio-cultural anthropology are without exception based upon ethnographic field research together with appropriate archival and library work. Archaeology students can base their theses on fieldwork, collections analysis, or re-analysis of legacy datasets. Copies of past student research proposals are available for consultation in the departmental administrative ('ASC2 hub') office on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the Leacock Building.

The research proposal sets out the research problem, theoretical approach, forms of data collection and analysis, and expected research outcome. It must include a statement of measures to be taken to ensure that ethical considerations are satisfied. The proposal should be between 20 to 30 pages long, double spaced (Times New Roman font, 12-point) and in pdf format. Proposals must be approved by the supervisor before being submitted and should be discussed with committee members.

Students must schedule a [proposal defence](#) and submit their [proposal](#) with the Graduate Program Coordinator in copy **at least two weeks** before the proposed date.

**Students may be required to do revisions of the Proposal that could require postponing departure for fieldwork. This should be considered before making departure plans, such as purchasing fixed-date departure tickets. (Pay attention to airline rescheduling penalties.)**

## Research Proposal Defence

Students are required to defend their research proposal before the committee. They are expected to prepare a twenty-minute presentation discussing their proposed research. Ideally, students defend their proposal by the end of Winter semester of the PhD3 year. Students must register for the PhD Comprehensive Exam (ANTH 701) and the PhD Proposal Defence (ANTH 702) at the beginning of the semester in which they expect to take the exam and defend the proposal.

The defence is a public meeting open to all staff and students. The student's advisory committee evaluates the student's proposal and readiness to begin fieldwork. The candidate may be passed or passed subject to revision ([see Record of PhD Proposal Defence form](#)).

**Proposal defences are normally not held from June to the beginning of September.**

## Research Ethics

If applicable, students must receive approval from the University Research Ethics Board (REB) before beginning to conduct research, including pilot or preliminary research.

<http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/guidelines/general-requirements>

## Fieldwork

Residence at the field site is typically one year, or alternatively, two or more summers. Students must obtain the necessary research permits.

## Dissertation

The PhD dissertation reports the findings of the research project, placing them in the context of anthropological and other relevant literature. The dissertation must be substantial and an original contribution to knowledge. Thesis preparation and submission guidelines as well as thesis submission forms are available [here](#).

## Submission Deadlines

Please consult the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website for official submission dates, registration and fees [here](#).

## Oral Defence

The Department must inform the Thesis Office of the membership of the Oral Defence Committee at least **four weeks** prior to the Defence date. Full instructions and guidelines regarding Doctoral oral examinations are available [here](#).

## Timetable for Completing PhD Requirements

Students with Masters Degrees register in PhD 2, which is the first year of the doctoral program. The doctoral program is ideally a 4-year degree, which may extend into a 5th year; after the 6th year, the right to maintain registered status is suspended (i.e., the whole PhD program must be completed in 6 years).

### PhD 2 [Start quickly; plan ahead]

#### Fall Semester

- First course (ANTH 602 Theory I)
- Second course
- Take Proseminar I (ANTH 609D1)
- Work with supervisor to identify graduate seminars, potential committee members
- In Fall, prepare proposal for application to grant/fellowship applications
- Determine language requirement: take exam or language classes if required

#### Winter Semester

- Third course (ANTH 603 Theory II)
- Fourth course
- Take Proseminar II (ANTH 609D2)
- Possible additional Graduate Seminar
- The committee must be complete

#### ➔ By May of the first year you should have:

- Completed four courses (Theory I and II and two other courses) plus the Proseminar
- Established members of your Advisory Committee

### PhD 3 [To register for PhD 3, you must have completed four courses and the Proseminar sequence]

#### Fall Semester

- Fifth course
- Sixth course
- Start discussing the comprehensive exams with your supervisor first, and your complete committee later
- In October, if needed, submit further grant/fellowship applications
- In November, submit research grant/fellowship applications
- Begin drafting the departmental PhD proposal

#### Winter term

- Register for ANTH 701 *Comprehensive Examination* and ANTH 702 *Proposal Defence*
- Take the comprehensive exam (ANTH 701)
- Submit and defend the PhD Research Proposal (ANTH 702)
- Fulfill the language requirement
- Schedule and hold your oral Proposal Defence (to do so, you must have completed six courses, the

Proseminar series, passed the language requirement, and submitted a REB application)

- If needed, apply for an internal SSHRC research grant

➔ **By May of the second year you should have:**

- Completed all six courses and the Proseminar series
- Completed the language exam and defended your comprehensive exam and the research proposal
- Begun preparing to start field research
- If necessary, submit more research grant applications

**PhD 4 [To register for PhD 4, you must have defended your comps exam and research proposal]**

- Pursue field research
- End field research

**PhD 5 [Ideally, complete your degree by the end of PhD 5]**

- If not yet done, end field research
- Analyze field data, dissertation outline, dissertation writing

**PhD 6 [If you are not finished yet.... finish now]**

- Complete dissertation
- Submit dissertation
- Defend dissertation

**PhD 7 [Avoid entering PhD 7]**

- Last year before Time Limitation
- No further registration after August 31st of the PhD 7 year  
Funding levels fall dramatically in PhD 7

**Study Plan for a PhD 1 Student**

Students admitted to the PhD program directly from the BA begin the program in PhD1. The itinerary of students entering PhD 1 is below.

| PhD1                              |                                   | PhD2     |          | PhD3     |  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| Fall                              | Winter                            | Fall     | Winter   | Fall     | Winter                                   |
| 1 course                          | 1 course                          | 1 course | 1 course | 1 course | ANTH 701<br>Comprehensive<br>Examination |
| 1 course<br>(usually ANTH<br>602) | 1 course<br>(usually ANTH<br>603) | 1 course | 1 course | 1 course | ANTH 702<br>Proposal<br>Defence          |
|                                   | 1 course                          |          |          |          |  |
| ANTH<br>609D1/607D1<br>Proseminar | ANTH<br>609D2/607D2<br>Proseminar |          |          |          |  |

**Table 3. Study Plan for a PhD1 student**

## Evaluation of Progress

The courses at the MA and PhD level are graded by individual faculty members. According to Faculty of Arts regulations, grades are submitted as letter grades (A, A-, B+, B, B-, F).

The **minimal rate of progress** required to maintain good standing is as follows:

**MA Non-Thesis Program:** This program is designed to be completed in one year. The whole program must be completed within two years.

**MA Thesis Program:** Students must have completed at least three of the four courses during their first year to register for the second year. The whole program must be completed within three years.

**PhD Program:** Students should have completed four courses during their first year of study. The minimum requirement for registration for the third year is completion of the six courses, the language requirement, the comprehensive exam and the research proposal; the whole program must be completed within six years. (Extenuating circumstances may prevent some students from meeting ideal completion times.)

## Research Tracking Progress

Every April, the student and supervisor meet to review the progress that has been achieved toward the recorded objectives. Prior to the meeting, the student should record their accomplishments and progress for the year by completing the annual [Graduate Research Progress Tracking Report](#), e-mailed to each student by the Graduate Program Coordinator. The student's supervisor and the departmental representative evaluate the completed form, which all parties sign. A student who does not agree to sign the form must write a statement detailing their objections.

If research progress is unsatisfactory, a new set of objectives should be developed at the meeting and recorded on [Graduate Research Progress Tracking Report](#). These interim objectives apply only to the next semester. Evaluation of progress should take place after that semester has concluded, following the steps described in point 3. A student with **two** unsatisfactory evaluations may be required to withdraw from their program of study. These two unsatisfactory evaluations need not be successive.

## Research Ethics and Compliance

Much anthropological field research involves interaction with human subjects. Therefore, both **MA and PhD students must obtain proper ethics certification before field research, if applicable.**

The Research Ethics Board (REB) Office, a unit within the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research & Innovation), promotes the highest ethical standards of research involving humans with the primary goal of protecting the rights and welfare of the individuals who are participants in research. The REB Office administers the review process for REBs-1,2,3,4; provides guidance to researchers in the preparation of submissions; develops and implements policies and procedures to ensure compliance with applicable provincial, national and international requirements; educates and advises researchers on research ethics issues and the review process.

Students are encouraged to begin their ethics application as early as possible in order to avoid delays. Depending on the nature of the student research project, student ethics applications may or may not require a full Research Ethics Board review. New applications and amendments expected to involve no more than minimal risk can be submitted at any time. Minimal risk research may be evaluated by a delegated review rather than by a full board review. Allow a minimum of 6 weeks for review. Minimal risk research is defined as follows: *"if potential participants can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and*

*magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the participant in those aspects of his/her everyday life that relate to the research, then the research can be regarded as within the range of minimal risk”.*

Please review - <https://www.mcgill.ca/research/research/compliance/human/reb-i-ii-iii/forms-and-guidelines>

The REB Office also holds regular drop-in sessions for students to ask questions or have draft applications reviewed. In addition, the Department organizes a session on the REB evaluation process as part of the Proseminar series.

## Departmental Administration of Graduate Matters

The Department provide graduate students with the following staff and faculty support. The Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) is the point administrative person for all technical and administrative questions. The Department also has a Graduate Committee made of faculty members to handle graduate affairs. The Graduate Program Director (GPD) is available to students for consultation, advice, guidance, and to resolve any issues or uncertainties. The Fellowships Officer is the point person for grant and award competitions. The Proseminar Leader organizes and runs the proseminar and, along with the Fellowships Officer and individual supervisors, will mentor students in grant writing.

In addition, the Anthropology Graduate Student Association (AGSA) has an elected representative who attends all official department meetings. Departmental Disagreement Resolution Procedure

These procedures are intended to resolve conflicts between graduate students and their supervisors (or supervisory committees) as outlined in 8.1.3 (v) of the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Graduate Student Calendar. It is important that students attempt to resolve such conflicts within the Department before seeking outside assistance, since this mechanism for dispute resolution exists. The confidentiality of the issues raised at each step will be ensured to the greatest extent possible.

If you find yourself in a conflict with your supervisor or supervisory committee, you should follow these steps, in this order:

1. Informal discussions with your supervisor. Discuss the matter tactfully with your supervisor, who may be unaware of the problem and will usually be happy to help find a satisfactory solution.
2. Discussion with the Graduate Program Director (GPD). (If your supervisor and the GPD are in a Conflict-of-interest relationship, you should proceed to Step #3).
3. Discussion with the Department Chair. The Chair should attempt to resolve the conflict, either by providing mediation or making alternative arrangements for the continued supervision of the student if the student is otherwise performing satisfactorily in the program.

If your supervisor is also the Graduate Program Director or Department Chair, and you cannot resolve the problem with them, you should proceed to Step # 4.

4. Informal meeting with the Associate Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS), or (depending on the issue) the Ombudsperson. Under these circumstances, an informal meeting outside the Department is often all that is required for both sides to reach an agreement. If further steps are warranted, the Associate Dean or Ombudsperson will then advise you to that effect.

## Resource Centre: TA'ing & Teaching in Anthropology

Students are encouraged to participate in the AGSEM Teaching Assistant Training, the annual SKILLSETS Learning to Teach (LTT) event, and other [McGill Skillsets](#) trainings offered by Teaching and Learning Services.

### General Teaching Tips and Guidelines

- *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, by bell hooks (1994)
- *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*, by Wilbert McKeachie (2002).
- *Strategies in Teaching Anthropology*, edited by Patricia Rice and David McCurdy (2000).

### On Grading, Assessment, and Designing Evaluation

- *The Art of Evaluation: A Handbook for Educators and Trainers*, by Tara Fenwick and Jim Parsons (2000).
- McGill course pack for EDPE-670 *Evaluation in Higher Education*.

## Residency and Graduate Faculty Fees

Information on fees and charges can be found on the Students Account website at:

<https://www.mcgill.ca/student-accounts/tuition-charges/fallwinter-term-tuition-and-fees/graduate-fees>

## Financial Aid

Sources of financial aid are limited and are restricted by citizenship, residence, and selective criteria of merit. Most students in our Department do, however, receive substantial financial support in the form of fellowships, grants, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, or other awards.

## Fellowships

There are both internal and external sources of funding. For details on the various types of fellowships and grants, please visit the following web site: <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/funding/students>. Every year, GPSO provides the Department with fellowships that are distributed to incoming and ongoing students.

## Teaching Assistantships

A collective agreement between McGill University and the TA union, AGSEM (Association of Graduate Students Employed at McGill) covers rates of pay and working conditions. Please refer to the collective agreement for details regarding procedures for appointment of Teaching Assistants, etc., or contact the AGSEM representative (an Anthropology graduate student) for the Department. <http://www.mcgill.ca/hr/labour-relations>.

Under the present contract, a full teaching assistantship consists of a maximum of 180 hours of work per term, spans 15 weeks and involves an average of 12 hours of work per week.

Teaching Assistant positions are posted via Workday the Anthropology website at <https://www.mcgill.ca/anthropology/graduate/funding-your-graduate-studies/ta>. Applications for TA positions are done through Workday.

## Research Assistantships

Research assistantships are available through individual staff members' research projects.

## Other Awards

*Bruce G Trigger Fellowship*: supports a First Nation, Métis, or Inuit graduate student pursuing research in the archaeology or sociocultural anthropology of North America. The award is worth \$10,000.

*Bruce and Barbara Trigger Graduate Prize in Archaeology*: to one or more outstanding students at the MA or PhD who are pursuing archaeological research. Approximately \$5,000 is awarded each year, typically to one student for field expenses; occasionally, the award is split or awarded for laboratory or other expenses.

## Leave of Absence

Please consult [this](#) GPS page.

## Non-resident status

Please consult this website <https://www.mcgill.ca/legaldocuments/international> and the Graduate Program Coordinator.

## Reinstatement and Admission of Former Students

Please consult the [GPS webpage](#) and the Graduate Program Coordinator

Students who have not been registered for a period of up to two years but who have not officially withdrawn from the University by submitting a [Withdrawal Form](#) to Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) are eligible to be considered for reinstatement. The Department must recommend in writing that the student be reinstated, stipulating conditions for reinstatement. The final decision rests with GPS; normally, GPS will approve the Department's recommendation. If the Department chooses not to recommend reinstatement, the student may appeal to the Associate Dean (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies). The Associate Dean's decision can be appealed to the Graduate Committee on Student Standing.

## Statement on Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the code of student conduct and disciplinary procedures <http://www.mcgill.ca/deanofstudents/plagiarism>.

*L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site).*